

The book cover features a watercolor illustration. In the upper left, a witch with a pointed hat and a broom is depicted. In the background, a crowd of people is gathered in a park-like setting with bare trees. To the right, a church with a tall steeple is visible. The lower half of the cover is dominated by a large, glowing yellow cross. In the bottom left corner, a woman is shown kneeling in prayer, her head bowed. The overall color palette is dominated by blues, purples, and yellows.

# FROM WITCHCRAFT TO CHRIST

My true-life story  
DOREEN IRVINE

# **From Witchcraft to Christ**

**Doreen Irvine**

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## **AUTHOR'S NOTE**

*I have of necessity omitted many details of my former life, the people I was associated with at this time and other personal details.*

*I should also point out that the time and sequence of events described in my book covers a very wide period in my life and so it is advisable that they do not be read as a continuing sequence within an assumed time span. The reason for this was to present a readable account of part of my life and to avoid having to relate definite dates and situations with known persons living or dead.*

# Preface

The record of Doreen Irvine is quite incredible, and I authenticate it wholeheartedly. It was in Bristol in 1964 that our paths first crossed. Her condition was that of unbelievable evil, for her life had been immersed in debauchery of a kind I had never before come across.

For seven months I knew what it was to wrestle with terrible powers of evil in relation to her life. On the occasion of every period of exorcism she had to be held down by others (Christian men and women) in prayerful support.

The New Testament came alive in terms of encounters with demons of different character, who contested the ground they had in her life. With extraordinary intelligence, utterly beyond the human, they acted and spoke *through* her and yet certainly not from her mind.

I well remember the night in February 1965 when, following my preaching engagement in a Bristol church, the last of forty-seven demons were expelled from her tormented and tortured being. Ended was a prolonged and dangerous period of seven months of hell in a life-and-death struggle.

Doreen is a trophy of God's grace. The power of God was demonstrated in her remarkable supernatural deliverance by the dynamic authority of the Lord Jesus Christ. All the credit and glory go to Him who did it. It was my awful privilege simply to be His instrument as I was enlightened and enabled by the Holy Spirit to be at His disposal for His ends of victory and transformation in her life.

The subsequent events since 1965 confirm the reality and validity of the work of God in Doreen Irvine. She is being used graciously and greatly by her Lord in this and other lands for the spread of the Gospel in its fullness. Her book makes a vital contribution in warning those who indulge in the deep things of Satan; it serves to open the eyes of Christians to the stark reality of the demonic in these days in our own land and to the means of grace in the way of deliverance through our Lord Jesus Christ.

There can be no doubt about the blatant way in which the forces of darkness are at work in the world today.

The rapidly increasing interest in and practice of magic, its sinister association with occultism, witchcraft and Satanism, are grim factors of

awful portent. That there are strange and malevolent powers at work in supernatural reality behind the scenes is both a Scriptural truth and a fact of experience.

Jesus Christ Himself expressed most lucidly the reality of a personal devil and of myriads of demons acting in evil ways to oppress, obsess, and possess people. The nature of the conflict between good and evil, God and the devil, is the theme of the Bible.

To every true believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, salvation means release from the bondage of Satan and the dominion of evil. It brings victory over the powers of diabolical wrong through the authority of His perfect and supreme command.

It is my prayer that the Holy Spirit will use this book to the magnifying of the name and the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Arthur Neil  
Brixham  
Winter 1972

# 1. Life's Early Morning

THAT Sunday morning in September 1939 began in the East End of London like any other Sunday. I was born there, and I knew its blend of sounds and way of life.

The voices of children at play in the streets mingled with the excited barking of dogs. Clad only in my knickers, I was having my weekly wash at the rough wooden table in the kitchen of our tenement home. The dirt from the grimy street seemed reluctant to leave my knees as my mother scrubbed them with a piece of rough flannel.

The radio in a corner of the bare room added a sort of accompaniment to the scrubbing operation. My mother paused as the solemn stroke of Big Ben rang from the radio set. I, at the age of seven, was more interested in the beckoning sound of play from the streets than in the droning sound from the radio.

“Oh, my God!” cried my mother suddenly, dropping the soap to the floor.

“What’s up, Mum?” I asked.

“It’s war, war . . .”

Almost as she said the word – which I little understood the hollow frightening wail of an air-raid alert rang out over the city. It was a sound I was to hear frequently in the months ahead.

By early summer of 1940 the air-raids had increased so greatly that we were evacuated to Uxbridge – not a great move in terms of geographical distance, for Uxbridge lies only sixteen miles from London. Here a true Cockney kid a cheeky one – whose early years had been spent within the sound of Bow Bells, was to spend the rest of her childhood, with all the problems that came with it.

Uxbridge lies at the end of the Metropolitan Line and is now the home of many London commuters. Not a very large town, it is, however, busy with a steady flow of traffic mainly on the London Road. The beautiful surrounding countryside, in the neighbourhood of Windsor, is popular with Londoners seeking week-end recreation. Two rivers run through Uxbridge, also small streams and a canal, all giving rise to industries needing water.

On the edge of the town is a large moor, and it was near here that our new home stood: a new council house on a small estate. Other evacuee families lived nearby in their “home from home.”

Our house was treated with no great respect by the tenants, who had come from an East-end slum. The front gate was ripped off for fire-wood. The garden, soon a wilderness, fronted a house that became increasingly untidy.

Home life centred in the kitchen which was dirty and scantily furnished. Dominating the room was a large, rough wooden table, on which I sat to have my weekly wash. The tablecloth was an old newspaper, patterned with news from the war fronts. In the centre of the table stood a huge brown teapot, very rarely empty, as someone was always making tea. A bottle of milk, watered down to make it go farther, had its place near the brown teapot.

There were only three chairs in the kitchen. No rugs or lino covered the bare boards of the floor. No curtains hung from the windows – just old sacks that also served as blackout blinds.

Very few meals were eaten at the table. My four young sisters and I had to sit on the floor or the back doorstep to eat whatever we had given us, which was not much – mostly bread and lard. We drank tea from a jam jar. I had to hold my jam jar with the end of my dress as it was so hot.

“Why can’t we have meat and roast potatoes and cake, Mum?” I asked one day. “My friend ’round the corner does.”

“We can’t afford things like that, so stop moaning and eat what you’ve got.”

“Do yer need a lot of money, Mum, to buy meat, potatoes, and cake?” I persisted.

“Yes. So be a good girl and be satisfied with what you’ve got.”

But my mum’s answer didn’t satisfy me any more than my diet did. My curiosity grew, and one day when school was over, I decided to find out more.

It was a warm spring day, and the trees and lawns were lovely. The blossoms looked so beautiful, in fact, that I wanted to climb up into the pink-laden branches.

Beyond the trees were well-built, expensive properties, where the “posh people” lived. This little girl, open-mouthed in wonder, somehow managed to peer through the windows of one or two of the nice houses.

It was like looking into another world: furniture so highly polished you could see your face in it, big, soft-looking chairs, coloured carpets, and lovely, lace tablecloths.

“I wonder what it’s like to live in a house like that?” I asked myself. “I wonder what it’s like upstairs. And fancy having such lovely trees growing in the garden!”

I remembered that my friend who lived ’round the corner had a real bed with white sheets – not at all like my bed, which wasn’t a bed at all, only a makeshift pile of dirty coats on the floor, upstairs. Mum and dad had the only bed in the house, but it was without sheets too.

I giggled when I thought how the large brass knobs of the bed often fell to the floor with a loud clang. Sometimes that happened late at night, when dad stumbled in from his night out at the pub.

“Ah, well.”

After one final, envious look at the houses and the lovely trees I made my way home.

No one asked me why I was home late from school, although I nearly lost my tea. Keeping the exploration a secret, I decided I would go again another day. This experience was the first discovery of beauty in the life of a sensitive, neglected little girl. It made me wonder about a lot of things.

I was the eldest of five girls and as “big sister” was often left to look after the rest of the family (even though I was still very young myself). Dad worked as a refuse collector for the local council – at least when he was sober. My mum thin and worried, often had to go out late at night into the blacked-out streets in search of him. In a strange way she always made excuses for his drinking habits and blamed them on the war.

With my keen sense of humour and vivid imagination I carried out my family responsibilities easily. My younger sisters loved me, even though I took a page from the tough book of life as I observed it and didn’t think twice about giving them a sharp box around the ears when the situation demanded it. In fact, my own special brand of discipline became widely known.

No one minded – after all, it was my job to look after them. And after others too – lots of them – as neighbours also left their children in my tender care. The little ones looked up to me and respected me. Because I was bigger, had a good sense of humour, and was, in fact, a born leader, like a youthful Pied Piper of Uxbridge I was followed by a selection of grubby but smiling children.

And of course by my dog.



Animals played a lively part in my life. The back garden was full of them. My father kept chickens, although there were never any eggs to eat. Perhaps dad sold the eggs in the pub to obtain more money for drink.

“Him and his beer,” I would say.

The garden also contained two rabbits, a couple of ferrets, many cats, and a goat. But the family dog – Bessie, a black Labrador – was my favourite and was known everywhere as “Doreen’s dog.” Bessie followed me everywhere I went.

With such company I needed wide, open spaces. Fortunately there were several places to have adventures: two recreation grounds, the river banks, and a playing field, where the grass was always green and springy. My form of democratic decision-making was quite unique in someone so young.

“Now kids,” I would address the grubby throng around me, “where shall we go tonight – the swing rec or the playing field?”

“The swing rec, Dor, the swing rec!” the children would shout.

I reflected for a moment and said, “No, we’ll go to the river,” and they duly followed me. The swing rec, with a multitude of playing apparatus, was a great favourite.

But it was bound to be fun wherever Dor went.

The fun often inclined to mischief, and my nimble mind invented many pranks to keep my charges happy – even if the grown-ups were less amused.

One of my tricks was to assemble the children at the bus stop. When the bus approached I would solemnly hold out my hand. The driver dutifully slowed down. When the bus stopped, we would all race away laughing. But the trick didn’t fool the driver for long. He got wise to us. Instead of stopping he accelerated, and with a broad grin at us he hurtled past.

One night when I and the children were passing the public house, we saw “Old Joe’s” horse and cart outside, as usual. Old Joe was the local “rag and bone” merchant and was well known for his drunkenness. I had a sudden inspiration: why not unharness the horse and put him back to front between the shafts and wait to see what happened?

The docile old horse was very obliging, as led by me we performed the tricky operation. An hour or so later out came Old Joe, drunk as usual – so drunk in fact he noticed nothing wrong as he stumbled up onto the cart.

“Yee up! Get up, there!” shouted Old Joe.

Imagine our shrieks of delight as the old horse obeyed and the cart with Old Joe went hurtling backward instead of forward. Old Joe couldn't understand it at all and swore and shouted at the poor horse, while we were doubled up in fits of laughter.

Not all the tricks were so harmless however –like the petty thefts from the local shops. But these acts were prompted by my concern for the children, who were always hungry and never had sweets and other nice things to eat that some of the other children enjoyed. The only way to get them was to steal them.

My strategy was simple. Somehow I would obtain a penny or two, usually by begging from a passer-by, then walk into the sweet shop with the children. Whilst the shop keeper's attention was taken up by me and my penny, the other children would be helping themselves to what they wanted.

The cake shop was another easy target where it was easy to grab a bun from the display in the window if you were quick – and I was quick. On one occasion we nearly got caught. My sister snatched a bun, only to find that five more came with it. As they fell to the ground, she stopped to pick them up. Instead of running away at once. It was a near thing.

Had my mother known about this stealing she would have been angry, but in the face of her own worries mother was often apathetic. Life was too much of a struggle to worry about morality – or God. God! It was just like another swear word to me.

There were plenty of swear words in our house. My Father's drinking habits were getting far worse, and he was often violent. I saw the cut lips and bruises on my mother's face. She always had black eyes.

I would run into the back garden. "Oh, God!" I would say aloud. "Don't let anything awful happen, oh, God!" That word again. How readily it came to my lips!

What would happen to us all if things continued this way? But it was the look of sadness and resignation on my mother's face that was the worst of all. I tried to push my fears away by thinking, "Perhaps things will be all right in a little while. Perhaps things will be different tomorrow."

One morning I felt mum's hand gently shaking me. "Wake up, Dolly, wake up!"

Mum always called me Dolly, as I was so small for my age.

I sat bolt upright on the pile of dirty coats that were my bed.

"What's up, Mum? What's up?"

“Nothing’s wrong, Dolly. I just want you to take this little note to the shop on the moor.”

Even though it was early in the day, I did not fail to see the look of concern on my mother’s face.

“Ain’t yer got no money, Mum?”

“That’s right. Now you be a good girl and hurry back home.”

Asking for credit was now the only way my mother could feed her young family. Yet her pride dictated that she send her daughter early in the morning, when no one else was around.

I dressed quickly and was off. It was a long way for my young legs, and the morning was cold and windy. As I hurried along the main road, I looked up at the tall trees and saw the branches bending in the strong wind. I felt a sense of mystery as I watched the dark trees.

I paused at the entrance to the small graveyard, which was a short-cut to the shop. Familiar in the broad light of day, it looked so eerie in the wild dawn. Although I was afraid, remembrance of my mum’s face drove me to begin my cautious way along the graveyard path, glancing over my shoulder as I went along. I was afraid that at any moment one of the graves would open and swallow me.

At last the other side was reached. Here I had to cross a small wooden bridge. Having fished for tiddlers in the stream below, I knew the bridge well, but today, creaking in the wind, it looked so different. In fact, everything looked different – larger, more menacing, and strangely new.

The bright lights at the little shop cheered me up a bit. The shopkeeper read the note and smiled at me.

“You’re up early today.”

He gave me a few groceries, and I retraced my steps home. “All right, Dolly?” asked my mum.

“Yes, Mum. I’m just cold.”

Mum made some cocoa, and we sat by the fire chatting as Uxbridge itself awoke to another day in war-time England.

I never forgot that early morning experience in the early morning years of my life. So many questions spun around in my little head – questions which I had never asked before.

“Where did the wind come from? Who made the trees so tall, and how long do they live? Why was I born? And what is it like to die?”

There seemed to be no one to whom I could put such questions. Mum had enough on her mind. Besides, I wasn't sure that mum would know about such matters.

I had become aware of life. What did it all mean?

Memories of my early years are stamped indelibly on my mind. So much happened – sad things, comical things, puzzling things, but not many happy things.

However, life is for living and not for brooding. Instead of brooding, I stored things up inside me.

In the summer holidays the sun always seemed to shine. The days were long and warm, and most of them were spent out of doors. I roamed the streets, often having fun until late at night. And always with my little band of followers.

We must have looked a very sorry sight. My constant attire summer and winter was a thin cotton dress and a matted jumper which seemed to last for years. Socks were an unknown luxury, and we often had no shoes to wear.

But at this stage of my life appearances didn't worry me, although at times I was aware of these things. After all, I was very young. This was still life's early morning.

## 2. The Fishing Trip

ALTHOUGH my father was usually drunk and often aggressive, I loved him with all my heart.

“If only he wouldn’t drink so much and make mum unhappy,” I thought.

Every penny he earned was spent on drink. Even the ration and clothing coupons were sold at the pub for more drink. What was left for clothes, food, or fuel? Still, he was *my dad*, and he did have his sober moments, even if they were few and far between. These times were precious to me.

Let us look at one of these rare events, for I recall it very clearly.

It was a fine summer morning, a Saturday, when there was no school. My dad was up early for a change, having a shave in the dingy kitchen. He was cheerful too and singing at the top of his voice.

Suddenly he called out, “Doreen, are you awake?”

“Yes, Dad,” I answered.

“Are you coming fishing with me today?”

“Yes, Dad.”

I could hardly believe my ears and couldn’t dress fast enough. Dad got out the rusty old fishing tackle, and very soon father and daughter set off happily down the road, hand in hand.

When we reached the river, I watched my dad proudly as he cast the line. Dad was a good fisherman. He began talking about fish and how fish should be caught. I listened – not that I understood all he was saying. But it didn’t matter. Most important for me was that I was out with my dad, with no grubby children around.

I enjoyed every moment of that fishing trip as we sat side by side, chatting and laughing and watching the red float in the water. It was a perfect day, like those cloudless, sunny mornings we remember from childhood.

The clean, sweet air smelt fresh, as the summer breeze swept my long brown hair across my face. I felt good to be alive. The tall trees looked beautifully green. The mossy river bank was soft, the green rushes stately and peaceful. All the unhappiness of the past weeks seemed to melt away in the golden sunshine.

Apart from the singing of the birds and the gentle ripple of the river nothing could be heard. No one would believe there was a war on.

Everything was so peaceful and still that it seemed *my dad* and I were the only ones alive in the whole wide world.

Little did my father know what else I was thinking. “Perhaps dad won’t want to drink anymore. Perhaps he will take me fishing with him instead. Everything would be so wonderful!”

These were the happy thoughts and this was the bright hope that filled my young heart.

“Time to go home now, Doreen,” said my dad.

The time had passed so quickly. When dad got home, he put the few fish he had caught into the bath, where he always deposited his catch. The bathroom was never used for its proper purpose.

One time dad caught a large eel. My sister and I watched in awe as he filled the bath with water and put in the big eel.

I remember standing on an old wooden box and poking the funny eel with a long stick – through the small window, as dad always locked the bathroom door.

If my hopes had risen that unforgettable Saturday, they were soon to be dashed, for as soon as dad had put the fish into the bath, he went straight to the pub and stayed there until closing time.

There were times when I felt I could hate my dad for all the unpleasantness he caused. At other times a great sense of pity for him would sweep over me. It was then I would try to please him by cleaning his big boots, hoping he in turn would take me on his knee and tell me how much he loved me. But I never heard the words I dearly longed to hear. The conflicting emotions of love, hate, and pity for my father only made me more confused and insecure than ever.

“If only someone really loved me,” I would think sadly. Life only seemed to worsen. My father drank more heavily, and mum always looked worried.

As the war progressed with alarming severity, more air-raids were made, and other fears were then added to my life. Anti-aircraft guns stood at the top of Chandler’s Hill, not very far from my home. In the daytime the air-raids and the sound of gunfire were not so bad, but at night they were terrifying. On more than one night I was left alone to look after my sisters, while mum as usual was out looking for my dad. I was beginning to think that mum was right, and it was the war that caused dad to drink so much.

My four sisters would be very frightened, crying and clinging to me as we sat on the dirty coats that served as our beds.

“It will be all right, you’ll see. I won’t let anything happen to yer. I’ll look after yer,” I would say, trying hard not to show how frightened I too was.

When at last they fell asleep, tears would run down my cheeks – tears I had held back for the sake of my sisters. I felt utterly miserable and all alone. The strange, eerie light from the searchlights across the night sky lit the otherwise dark and bare room.

I would stand at the dirty windows and look up into the starry sky and then down into the street below, hoping to see mum and dad returning home. Sometimes I would stand there hours on end. It was then I would try to pray.

“Oh, God, please help me, and if You don’t think I’m worth it, please do something for my sisters and don’t bother about me. I know I’m not always very good, but I do try. Please, God, let it be all right for all of us – mum and dad and everybody.”

Nothing changed for the better, however, and because I felt my prayers went unanswered, I finally decided that there was no God and did not pray again.

My four sisters and I went to Sunday school every week, but it was only to get us out of the way for a while so that dad could have some “peace and quiet.” Dad came home from the pub stone drunk every Sunday afternoon, and my sisters and I were only too glad to get out of his way.

The Sunday school mission hall was just around the corner at Waterloo Road. I hardly listened to a word. In fact, I was most unruly and difficult to manage.

More than once I was sent out for disrupting the meetings, putting my own words to the hymns and choruses, and generally making life very difficult for the poor teachers, even throwing stones at the windows after being turned out for bad behaviour. Someone would then come out to chase me away. They never caught me – I was too quick for them.

We rough Cockneys sat apart from the better-dressed children, nearly all of whom were the children and friends of the adults who tried to teach us. I nicknamed these children “the posh kids” and made fun of their Sunday best clothes, straw hats, and white socks.

When Doreen and her band of followers marched into Sunday school, battle commenced. I was the ringleader, and the other Cockney kids merely followed my lead. In my estimation Sunday school was just another place in

which to have a bit of fun. Little did the teachers realize that if I had a hard and unhappy time at home during the week, I took it out on the Sunday school, and they bore the brunt of it on Sundays.

Nevertheless, the Sunday school teachers were patient and took an interest in me and my sisters. For no matter how many times I had to be turned out, no matter how unruly I was, the door was always open for me the next Sunday.

These incidents may be a source of encouragement to readers who are Sunday school teachers or youth workers, for as you read on you will see that the seed sown many years before my conversion did bring forth fruit.

The teachers may have felt that they were struggling in vain with me, but I never forgot those days at Sunday school. Occasionally I did pay some attention to what they were trying to say, and many times my conscience would be pricked as they spoke of the sin in boys' and girls' hearts and of the Saviour's love and forgiveness.

I could never sing these words from the *Golden Bells Hymn Book*;

*There is a city fair,  
Closed are its gates to sin.  
Naught that defileth, naught that defileth,  
Can ever enter in.*

The words conjured up a picture of a pair of golden gates with an angel on both sides holding flaming swords and barring the way from the golden streets and the place called heaven. I knew there was sin in my heart. I thought there was no chance of my getting into heaven. The Sunday school teacher had told me that no sin could ever enter that city so fair.

"No one who steals can enter heaven."

No one who steals.

"That's me," I thought. "I will never get in, because it's steal or starve."

So I gave up any idea of getting into heaven. Still I would go to the mission hall Sunday after Sunday, if only to get lemonade and cake, and sometimes apples, after the meetings had finished – gifts the teachers offered to us Cockney kids.

Besides, there were the Sunday school outings and parties to think about. I was not going to miss those. My sisters and I had little else to look forward to. Christmas came and went each year with neither me nor my



little sisters ever getting a single toy – or indeed anything else. It was the same on our birthdays – not one card, not one present.

The outings and parties at the mission, then, were very important indeed to all of us. My sisters and I were always the first children to arrive, sometimes waiting for hours before the doors opened.

When the air-raids were severe and I was frightened, I thought of the lessons I had heard at Sunday school. I considered prayer but in the end rejected it, thinking that Christianity was after all just a silly fairy tale.

When I was ten years old, however, I decided to join the C.A.W.G. Messengers, a group similar to the Brownies. Here I learned many interesting things, like tying knots, the Morse code, first-aid, etc.

The captain took a great deal of interest in me, and I in turn liked her very much. She gave me a uniform, knowing I would never get the money from my parents.

On Sundays, then, I was unruly and badly behaved, but on Monday evenings, when the Messengers met, I was as good as gold. The captain could hardly believe the reports she heard of my Sunday escapades.

One day she asked if I would like to go camping with the Messengers during the summer holidays, explaining that she would pay for me herself. Would I like to go? Why, I had never heard of anything more wonderful. I ran home and asked mum if I could go. Mum agreed.

I could hardly wait for the day to come. One week before camp was to start Captain drew me to one side and gave me all the things I would be needing for camp: scented soap, a soft flannel and towel, a new hairbrush and comb, tooth brush, and toothpaste, together with two new pairs of socks and a pair of pyjamas. I could only stand and stare at the lovely things, for I never before had such articles.

Captain said, “Tell no one I have given them to you. Take them home now, and bring them along when you go to camp.”

She wanted me to be no different from any other Messenger. I was filled with gratitude and joy beyond my wildest dreams. Every now and then I would unwrap the small parcel to see if all the items were still safe and, of course, to have another long look at them.

At last the great day came. I was up with the lark. It was a Saturday, unlike any other I had known. I was the first around the corner to wait for the transport – hours before it was due to arrive.

Eventually it came, and I scrambled into the huge van with the other Messengers. All “the gang”, as I always called them, plus my little sisters, were there to wave me good-bye. It was a proud moment in my life.

The campsite was situated in the beautiful countryside near Woking. Although it was not far from Uxbridge, it seemed like hundreds of miles away to me, who had never been on a bus ride.

I have never forgotten that glorious week away from home. We had the greatest fun playing in the woods, picking flowers, and running in and out among the trees. Campfire was just wonderful as we sat around it in a circle every evening, singing choruses. The fragrance of pine needles and the smoke from the fire mingled with the delicious smell of baked potatoes in their jackets and lingered in the warm evening air.

Yes, everything was too wonderful for mere words: the crackling of twigs in the campfire, the singing of the birds in the woods nearby, and the sun like a big red rubber ball glowing behind the tall fir trees.

It seemed that all creatures, from the birds to the grasshoppers, knew of the joy and utter contentment in my heart. My heart was singing, and even my quota of duties were a pleasure.

Sleeping in a real pair of pyjamas and under clean blankets was a delightful change from what I was used to. Cleaning my teeth was completely new to me. A change too was the good food – and plenty of it – the fresh air and spare time to do just what I liked. Even washing was an adventure – with the nice scented soap, soft flannel, and a big, fluffy towel to dry on.

Those seven days away from home were the happiest in my young life.

We were taken to a chapel on Sunday, and I enjoyed that too. I noticed that when the preacher spoke of Jesus dying on the cross, he wept real tears. That did impress me and made me feel very guilty about my bad behaviour at the mission hall in Uxbridge.

I didn’t want the week to end but to last forever and ever, as I told the captain. But the day came to leave, and all the Messengers were busy packing the equipment into the van, ready for the trip home.

I was very sad but thought, “Oh, well, there’s still the journey home and the ride in the van to look forward to.”

All too soon we were back in Uxbridge. It seemed to take hours to get to camp, yet the journey home lasted only a short time.

Back in Uxbridge on the grimy estate, a grubby crowd of children, “the gang,” was there to welcome me home as I jumped down from the huge van. The ugliness of home life was more evident than before, contrasting with the camp I had enjoyed so much.

I did not know then that in a strange way the camp had prepared me to become a different kind of messenger. I did not know that I, who had been fishing by the river bank, would one day hear God call me to be a fisher of men.

### 3. My Mum

AFTER my short holiday at camp with the C.A.W.G. Messengers life went on much the same as before.

The fights and arguments at home were unbearable at times. I wondered where and when it was going to end. What would happen to us all – my father, mother, and young sisters?

I could hardly be the school's best pupil when my mind was preoccupied with such questions. I had been attending day school at St. John's Primary in Uxbridge but was never able to learn very much. The teachers, who did not understand my problems, were always telling me off. School was one long nightmare. I constantly got into trouble for being late, etc. Even if I did try, nothing went right.

"It's all right for them," I thought. "It's easy just to sit there and tell me off all the time."

"Maybe it's because of my clothes," I decided.

I was beginning to realize I was different from some of the other children. My hair was always untidy, and the nurse kept sending me home because I had lice. "Nitty Nora" I called her. I hated her.

"It's not fair. She's always picking on me and my small sisters. Why do the teachers poke their nose where they're not wanted? Why can't they leave me alone?"

I was an object of ridicule to other boys and girls, who were better dressed and well cared for. The ridicule hurt me as I was very sensitive, despite my outward show of bravado. Yells of "Flea head!" and "Yellow teeth!" followed me wherever I went. The teachers were as bad as some of the children and made unkind remarks about my appearance.

"I can't 'elp it, can I? I hate yer and yer rotten old school," I would say.

Inevitably I played truant many times. Instead of going to school I went off to the park for the day. On these occasions I would lie on the grass, gazing up at the tall poplar trees and the clouds, daydreaming about faraway places like Africa and India – which proved I had listened to something at school – wondering what it would be like to travel to those distant lands across the sea.

I missed school for other reasons too. Mum often kept me at home to look after my baby sister Sylvia, or simply because I had no shoes to wear.

There was one subject in which I excelled: P.T. I could run like a hare, jump like a frog, and swim like a fish. These accomplishments earned me a little respect from some of the children at day school.

But even here I had problems, for long ago the elastic had parted from my very old knickers, which had to be held up by a very large safety pin. You can imagine the loud laughter of the girls when I had to remove my dress for P.T.

One day I went to the churchyard near the little shop on the moor, intending to play there. As I wandered around, I stumbled across a children's communal grave.

"Violet May" was one of the names on the headstone. The name appealed to me, and I began to speak to the dead child, fully believing she heard and understood. In my loneliness I built a fantasy around that grave. It gave me the feeling of having a bond with someone. It was as if Violet May represented the gentle father I had never known, the kindly school teacher I had never met.

On my way to and from school I would stop to kneel at the side of the grave, always bringing flowers I had taken from other graves. I would tell my new friend all my problems and share my fears with her. No one knew about the unusual friendship, for I regarded the meetings as secret and the dead child as my own special and private friend.

Other times I would go on expeditions to the top of a very large hill on the edge of town, picking bluebells or gathering conkers as I went. During the war an American camp was situated at the top of the hill, and I would creep under the hedge and through the barbed wire to watch the soldiers. When they came near, I would beg for chewing gum and chocolate. The Americans were kind and always gave me something. Then I would run back home and share the gum and chocolate with my sisters.

My fears throughout the years about the possible collapse of our family were soon to be realized. All love between my mum and dad had long since disappeared. Fights and rows, shouting and swearing were occurring every evening and during the daytime as well.

But the reason was different now. The rows were not about money or drink but about a strange woman. Who was this strange woman? I was puzzled. It was not long before I found out.

Dad got to know a woman who had recently lost her husband (he died in a mental hospital). Dad got friendly with her – too friendly, as far as my

mum was concerned. Mum was broken-hearted and went to pieces right before my eyes. I was at a loss what to do. She was always crying, and I was afraid to leave her alone.

“Don’t cry, Mum. It will be all right, you’ll see,” I would say in a desperate effort to comfort her.

“He has found someone else,” my mum would say. “He doesn’t want me anymore.”

“I’ll kill her if I get my hands on her,” I would say, “and I mean it.”

Life looked blacker than ever for me. Dark storm clouds were gathering overhead, threatening to burst any moment. My faithful friend Bessie, the black Labrador, sensed something was very wrong, and she looked sadly at her little mistress with her big brown eyes.

“Good old Bessie.” I would stroke her black head. “You understand, don’t yer, old girl.”

One fateful evening I returned home from play only to find yet again that mum was not there. I sighed as I saw the fire was out and there was no more fuel. The house was freezing cold. I got busy and gave my sisters some bread and margarine and then sent them off to bed on their usual heap of dirty coats. They were soon fast asleep, and I was alone.

It was dark outside now, and the night light had gone out. I was afraid that both mum and dad had left us all forever. I buried my face in my hands and wept.

Suddenly I heard my father’s voice and what seemed like a great crowd coming in through the front door. I tiptoed out on the landing to listen and heard something about the canal. At that I rushed downstairs.

There was my mum sitting on a chair, a grey blanket wrapped over her wet clothes. Several neighbours and an irate father looked on, he with a strange woman by his side. The foul smell of the canal met my nose.

“Yer rotten swine, yer can’t wait to get rid of her, can yer?” I shouted, thinking my dad had pushed my mum into the canal.

“The silly fool chucked herself in,” shouted my dad. Then for the first time I noticed his wet clothes.

“Well, it’s all yer fault – yer and yer fancy woman,” I yelled.

“And I suppose yer her,” I continued, turning to the woman at his side. “Get out of our house’ Get out and stay out!”

The neighbours left one by one, and so did my father and his fancy woman, as I called her.

Later I heard the whole sad story; Apparently mum had seen dad with his woman friend and followed them. She caught up with them at the canal bridge. A terrible argument followed, and mum ended it by jumping from the bridge into the canal below. Dad then felt obliged to jump in and rescue her, for mum couldn't swim. She just wanted to die, poor mum.

I was filled with fear that my mum would try to do something else to end her life. I was afraid to let her out of my sight.

Next day, Sunday, mum said she was going to leave home.

Then it was my turn to go to pieces.

"Please, Mum, don't leave us. Oh, please, Mum, don't go away" I pleaded. "I love yer, and I would die if yer left us."

I cried so much that my mum promised not to go, but I wasn't fully convinced by her words. The Sunday school teachers somehow heard of the sad happenings and were very kind to me and my sisters that afternoon.

On Monday morning I went to school, but my mind was not on my work. I was glad when dinner time came and ran all the way home, my dog Bessie at my heels.

The house was empty – not a sign of anyone, not even my baby sister. Then I saw a note propped against the half-empty milk bottle.

"Dear Dolly, Mummy's gone away and she won't be coming home anymore. Be a good girl and look after the others for me. Don't cry. Love, Mum."

I felt as if all my life had been squeezed from my little body. I read the note again, slightly dazed. My first reaction was disbelief.

"It can't be true. It's all a horrible nightmare."

It seemed as if an eternity had passed. I called mum, but the house was empty. I don't know how long it was before I began to weep. This broken-hearted child was overcome with grief.

When at last my sobbing ceased, the great void in my heart filled with intense anger and bitterness.

"I will show the world just how I feel. I will get my own back somehow!"

Then I left the empty house, hoping I might find my beloved mum. I did find the baby, Sylvia, but not mum. No one knew, or even cared, where she was or when she left.

Taking my baby sister with me, I spent hours looking and asking for my mum. But it was all in vain, and I returned yet again to a cold and empty

house. There was no food in the house, not even a crust of stale bread. My sisters and I were cold, frightened and very hungry.

When dad decided to come home at six o'clock and found his wife had left him, he was completely unconcerned.

"How can yer stand there and say nothing?" I blazed. "Yer drove my mum out – you and yer fancy woman friend!"

He ignored my outburst.

"Tomorrow you'll have a new mum to look after you."

"I don't want any new mum. I want my own mum," I cried.

My protest was of no use, for dad had made up his mind. After sending tearful Doreen to the shop for some chips to eat he went out to meet the other woman at the pub.

Next day, true to his word, dad brought in the new mum to take my mum's place. She brought with her two children of her own. That made me angrier than ever.

Then my sharp eyes noticed she was expecting a baby.

"Oh, I see now. Yer in the club," I said in true Cockney fashion. "That's why yer wanted to trap him. Well, I'm not calling yer mum. Yer not my mum, and yer never will be."

Dad thought his angry daughter would learn to accept the new situation, but he was wrong. Though a mere eleven years old, I had a very strong will. Even when his new woman made some toffee apples to win our affection, I refused to be bribed, telling her exactly what to do with her toffee apples.

The mutual hatred between us was never far below the surface. I dreamed of running away as my mother had done. But if I went too, who would look after my sisters? So I stayed and daily learned to hate anew.



## 4. Black Arrow

“SHE’S your mother now,” insisted my father.

But this young spitfire was unconvinced by the outward show of affection, if you could call it that.

The two young children she had brought with her were, in my opinion, spoiled brats, since they were allowed to do whatever they pleased.

The new woman who now ruled the household was younger than my real mother. I found a name for her Black Arrow<sup>1</sup>, because she had jet black hair and reminded me of a witch. Black Arrow seemed an appropriate name. It caused more trouble, but I flatly refused to call her anything else.

My father attempted to persuade his fiery daughter to accept the new woman, but his efforts were in vain.

He needed me to look after the increased number of children, for Black Arrow always accompanied my father on his constant trips to the pub. In contempt I called them “a couple of boozers”. There were frequent arguments.

In comparison with life as I now experienced it, the time when my mother cared for us was precious. I continued to look for my real mother, sometimes walking for miles – no easy task with a crowd of children and a dog at my heels. I stared into shops and houses in the hope I would encounter that beloved face. Alas, I never saw her again.

In those unsettling war years and postwar years it was not difficult to lose one’s identity. My mother could have gone anywhere with anyone, and no one would have noticed. The neighbours were not in the least interested in my questions. They regarded me as a nuisance from a house full of nuisances.

Yes, the house was certainly full, and very noisy. At first there was outright hostility between me and the two new children brought by Black Arrow. It came to a head when the children’s grandparents visited the house, bringing with them sweets and other gifts, but none for me or my sisters.

I watched my sisters gaze at the presents with envious eyes.

“Give some to the others, yer greedy little perishers,” I demanded, as I grabbed the bags of sweets from the gobbling children. They were too astonished to object.

After a while the two new ones accepted me as the boss who often assumed the roles of father and mother combined. I began to realize that they were not to blame for the state of animosity. Indeed, they too were victims of circumstance. Thus we became reconciled, and I acquired additional followers – for the inevitable crowd of kids continued to follow me wherever I went, even when I went looking for my real mum.

On a few occasions, when I was alone, I would visit the graveyard and tell Violet May my troubles and sorrows. Perhaps my friend was in the sky somewhere and could see my mum.

One day I returned from school to discover Black Arrow hitting my young sister. I was furious. I picked up the bread knife and chased Black Arrow around the room.

“I’ll kill yer, yer old witch, if yer hit my sister again!”

I shouted.

Seeing I was in earnest, Black Arrow retreated and screamed that she would tell my father as soon as he came home.

“Tell him what yer like, I don’t care what he does to me. But I know what I’ll do to you if yer hit any of my sisters.”

Scenes like this were not unusual. My father used to punish me – if he caught me. His mind was often so dulled by drink that it was not difficult to dodge him. He was baffled by my behaviour. Like other parents before and since, he tended to regard children as bits of furniture that could be moved around rather than as individuals with emotions.

The long war ended not long after my mother left home. An air of excitement prevailed throughout Uxbridge and on our dingy estate. Everyone was singing and laughing. Flags and bunting hung from the houses.

I hoped that the arrival of peace would improve family life. My mother had always insisted it was the war that made my dad drink so heavily.

“Perhaps dad will stop drinking now, and mum will return,” I thought.

Far from drinking less, dad got more drunk than ever before. By this time drinking had become his way of life.

There was one bright spot in this period. We had a road party to celebrate the end of the war. I’d never in my life seen so much food and made quite certain that I and my sisters had a fair share of all the good things.

It was a memorable year for other reasons also. I was growing up fast and was told it was time for me to transfer to the large senior school. This

change – a source of pride for most youngsters – meant only further worry for me.

My tattered appearance had brought derision at the junior school. What would it be like at the posh senior school? My father and Black Arrow were not the slightest interested in my problems. Once again I had to face a situation all alone with no word of encouragement.

“Yah old ragamuffin! Look at the dirty gipsy!”

My first week at the new school was filled with abuse. I tried to ignore the remarks of the other children and decided to try to please the teachers – even pinching some flowers from a nearby garden for the classroom.

Although by no means unintelligent, I was thought stupid because I rarely put up my hand when the teacher asked a question. I felt it was no use – I could never win. If I showed that I knew the answer to a question, the children would say, “You’re just a dirty cheat.”

It was best to remain unnoticed as far as I could. I hated school from the day I entered its gates to the day I left. No one noticed that beneath the rags and tatters there could be someone of talent and sensitivity.

During the next two years, in which I battled my way through senior school, Black Arrow had two babies, one for each year. The house now seemed full to overflowing. More responsibility was thrust on my young shoulders. By the time I reached my thirteenth birthday I was certainly old beyond my years.

About this time in my life I attempted to improve my personal appearance and that of my four sisters. The school clinic provided toothbrushes and toothpaste, as well as a fine-tooth comb to help the removal of fleas from our heads.

I became somewhat preoccupied with cleanliness. Using the substantial bar of “sunlight soap” at the sink, I would take time to wash my four sisters, and when satisfied with their appearance, I would turn my attention to the other children in the house. There was little time left for myself, but I was determined to improve on the spit-and-hanky cat-lick that had been so much a part of my life.

I had two prized possessions: one a string of glass beads given me by a friend, the other an old jewelry box that my father discovered on the dust-cart where he worked when sober.

I remember stealing a tin of silver cleaner from Woolworth’s and polishing the rusty old box until it shone. Then I placed the glass beads in it,

deciding to wear the beads only on Sundays. Sometimes I would take the beads from the box and hold them up to the sunlight to watch the beads sparkle. These were my only treasured possessions. Not much, but *mine*.

The combination of my campaign of self-improvement plus deteriorating family conditions prompted an exciting thought: why not leave home altogether? I began to make frequent visits to the underground station in Uxbridge High Street. There I sat on a wooden bench with my faithful friend Bessie at my side and watched the trains come and go.

The sights and sounds of the station excited the imagination of this restless thirteen year-old. What happiness could be found at the end of the silvery line? I dreamed of going to London one day and securing a job that would permit me to return to Uxbridge in grand style to rescue my sisters. Then we could all live together in a lovely house somewhere – live happily ever after.

But the thought of leaving my sisters obscured my dreams. What would happen to them in the meantime? The walks to the tube station, the fantasies, might have continued longer but for one small- but to me, terrible – tragedy: my faithful dog Bessie died.

Bessie, who had been a faithful companion for years, was old, but to lose her – it was a cruel blow. First mum gone, now my dog. It was too much. No one shared my grief. My sisters were too small to understand the great void left in my heart.

I decided to leave home for good – the next time I walked to the station would be the last time.

My father and Black Arrow went out every evening, so I was fairly confident I could leave the house without being observed. The hard part would be getting on the platform without a ticket.

Carefully I wrapped the beads and jewelry box, my sole possessions, in newspaper. Promising the children not to be long, I set out. As an experienced fast worker I found it easy to slip onto the platform when the ticket collector's attention was elsewhere.

Since this was my first train ride, I had no idea of the length of the journey to London. I had no idea how to slip past the ticket collector when I alighted. My heart was thumping in excitement as the train pulled out.

At Hammersmith I decided I had travelled far enough. The station was quite busy, and the clock showed ten minutes past ten – an hour when many people in Hammersmith were having a good time. I must have looked a

homeless waif, in my thin cotton dress and matted jumper with its lumpy shoulders. No one paid any attention to me as I once again slipped past the collector's barrier.

Outside, the busy streets of Hammersmith were ablaze with light. They fascinated me as I wandered about gazing into colourful store windows, hardly conscious that the evening was becoming colder.

"What are you doing out so late, young lady?"

I spun round to face a middle-aged man whose expression was a mixture of curiosity, humour, and kindness.

"I've run away from home, and I'm gonna get a job in the morning."

The man nodded thoughtfully.

"Do you have anywhere to stay tonight?"

"No."

I yawned and suddenly realized how hungry and tired I was.

"Well, my mother will be pleased to see you," smiled the stranger. "It's been a long time since we had a visitor like you."

We walked along in silence until we reached the house. It was dark, and I was too weary to notice the exterior of the house, but inside was lovely.

The kind stranger explained the situation to his mother.

"Supper's ready now," she said. "We'll have something to eat and sort it all out in the morning."

It wasn't long before I was tucked in a lovely, warm bed, experiencing for the first time in my life the joy of lying between newly washed sheets. I was soon fast asleep.

When I awoke the following morning, I was at first puzzled. Then I remembered the adventure of the previous evening.

"I've done it! I've run away!"

After a hearty breakfast of bacon and eggs I offered to do some housework for the kind lady.

"Well, we'll see about that later on. I'd like you to tell me how you came to be in Hammersmith so late at night."

I told her the story, but I didn't speak in self-pity. However I was looking for encouragement in the task I now faced. The kind lady wiped her eyes when I finished.

"So you see I gotta find a job to get some money so my sisters can come and live with me."

I was eager to get going.

“I want you to promise me you will come back and have some lunch,” said the lady. “Make sure you don’t get lost now.”

I made a careful note of the address and set out. On the main road to Hammersmith I noticed a cafe – not large, but clean and respectable looking. I made an inward nod of approval and entered.

The woman at the counter was busy polishing glasses with a clean tea-cloth.

“Excuse me. Can yer give me a job?”

The woman looked down at me in amazement.

“How old are you?”

I thought quickly.

“I’m fourteen. I know I’m small for my age, but I’ll work hard. “

“Well, I do need some help.”

“Go on, give us a chance,” I pleaded.

“All right. You come along tomorrow, and we’ll see how we get along.”

I was so overjoyed that my emotion quite overwhelmed the lady behind the counter. My expressions of gratitude lasted all the way to the door.

I raced back to the house, full of the good news. But – my face fell when I saw a policeman, a policewoman, and my father.

“What rotten luck!” I thought.

I might have known it wasn’t going to be that easy for me. The lady of the house came to me.

“I’m sorry, Doreen. But you’re only thirteen. You must go home with your father.”

“I don’t want to go home with him. I want to stay here.”

I began to cry.

“Don’t cry, Doreen. I want you to tell the policewoman what you told me this morning.”

I told the policewoman why I had come to Hammersmith – that I wanted to find a job so I could give my sisters a better life.

“And I got a job, too. I can start tomorrow if yer let me.”

The policewoman took me to another room and questioned me carefully about my home background. She listened intently as I told her all, leaving nothing out.

The interview ended with me being escorted back to Uxbridge in a big police car. At home the neighbours and the kids came out to stare at the returning adventuress. I was the heroine of the day and was considered very

brave. But my father gave me the biggest beating I'd ever received in my life.

"Don't you dare say another word to anyone," he threatened, "or you'll get another good beating."

Obviously the authorities had not entirely believed my father's denial of my statements, for the very next day an inspector from the local welfare department appeared at our house. Black Arrow, dressed in her best, blamed the shortage of money and other problems for the lack of care for the children.

Blankets and clothes were delivered by the children's department, and for a short time things improved. But the condition was short-lived. I was ready to run away again but wisely decided to wait until I'd reached my fourteenth birthday. I vowed then I would run so far that no one would find me.

It is uncertain whether my kind friend, the captain of the C.A.W.G. Messengers, heard of my attempt to run away but she knew about my problems at home and encouraged me in my attendance at Sunday school. To everyone's amazement, including mine, I won a special prize for good attendance. (Note: not good behaviour.)

The captain often spoke to me about Jesus Christ.

He has a purpose for your life, Doreen," she would say.

I didn't want to hurt the captain's feelings by rejecting Jesus Christ. On the other hand I never accepted Him.

"I will always pray for you," the captain said. "We will never give up trying."

It was the captain who finally opened the door of the cage in which I felt imprisoned. She secured me a post as a domestic servant in the village of Cowley, not far from Uxbridge. I was to start as soon as I left school, living in as a maid. Although the wage was small, the position offered many advantages in did well, the captain assured me.

The beginning of a new life awaited me. I looked forward to getting away from home at long last.

## 5. Transformation

IT was late summer on a Sunday afternoon.

“This will be the last time I’ll go to the mission,” I thought, for the day had arrived for me to leave my slum council home and start my life as a domestic servant in Cowley.

I hoped to see my good friend, the captain, at Sunday school, but she was away that afternoon. No one else seemed to know about my imminent departure. As we have seen, the captain worked on the biblical principle of doing good secretly; so I said nothing about leaving.

After Sunday school I walked home. My father and Black Arrow were out. Watched by my young sisters, I packed my belongings in a battered carrier bag. The task was quickly performed. I possessed no clothes other than those I was wearing. But I had my jewelry box and glass beads, as well as my prize from Sunday school: a copy of the *Golden Bells Hymn Book*.

My band of faithfuls were in the recreation grounds to see me off. My sisters looked rather downcast.

“Now don’t worry, kids,” I said as brightly as I could. “I’ll come back to see yer. Cowley’s only a couple of miles away, ain’t it? It’s not like going to Australia, is it?”

They waved good-bye to their little leader and watched until I disappeared over the bridge. I was sad. But that’s life.

Fortunately it was a fine afternoon. I had to walk all the way to Cowley. The instructions were plain, and there was no chance of getting lost. I felt nervous, however. What would the place be like? Would my experience be anything like that in Hammersmith? I had no idea what to expect.

Once again I was taking an important step all alone with no word of encouragement and assurance from anyone. On my solitary journey I had to pass my old school.

“Well, I don’t have to go there anymore,” I thought – and that was enough to cheer anyone up.

My heart beat faster as I quickened my pace. Soon Cowley came into view. It was a nice place; a bit posh, I thought, but nice. Peering carefully at the entrances to several houses, I finally discovered the number on my slip of paper.



The entrance gates were huge – something like the gates of heaven, only made of iron instead of gold. I walked slowly down the spacious drive and swallowed hard when I saw the large house.

I hesitated for a moment before ringing the front doorbell, half expecting the door to be opened by a butler in a black suit. After a few moments a rather elegant lady appeared. She looked at me in surprised interest.

“Yes, may I help you?”

“Um, I’ve come to be the new maid.”

The elegant lady stared at me, then said quickly and politely, “Oh, yes. I’ve been expecting you. Please come in.”

She took me into a huge hall, from which a wide staircase led to the upstairs rooms. I walked in wide-eyed, unable to utter a word. When I recovered, I said the first words that flew into my head.

“Cor, ain’t it posh!”

The lady turned in shocked surprise.

“I suppose you would like to see your room, wouldn’t you? Follow me, please.”

I followed her up the wide staircase in silence.

“Your room is up here on the left, and I’m sure you will like it.”

Like it? I loved it. Why, never before had I seen such a room.

I kept thinking, “Perhaps it’s like heaven” – of which I had been singing (with little conviction) that very afternoon in Sunday school.

The room had a lovely fitted carpet and was sensibly and nicely furnished: a bed with a pink coverlet, a dressing table with a real mirror, a chest of drawers, a wardrobe, and a bedside table. In the corner stood a wash-basin.

My eyes were darting from one wondrous object to another. I had no idea such luxury existed.

The lady spoke again: “Now, Doreen – that’s your name, isn’t it? – I am your employer. This is your room. When you want a bath, your bathroom is next door.”

My bathroom! I could hardly believe what I heard or saw.

“Your uniforms are in this chest of drawers. You may place your personal belongings in the dressing table drawers and wardrobe.”

As if her words had reminded her that I had arrived somewhat empty-handed, she inquired when my luggage would arrive.

“I ain’t got no luggage.”

“You mean you own nothing else?”

“Yes. Only this what I got.”

The lady was completely overcome by the realization that her new maid was all but destitute.

“Oh, dear! Well, something must be done. Wash your hands and come downstairs.”

She disappeared through the pink painted door. I heard her footsteps die away.

I sat cautiously on the bed. I wondered if I was going to be sent home again. Then, recovering myself, I unpacked my few possessions and placed them on the dressing table. Pride of place was given to my *Golden Bells Hymn Book* on the bedside table. Always inquisitive, I tried the bedside lamp and was rather surprised to find that it worked first time.

I carefully examined the uniforms I would wear. I took them out one by one and held them up against myself, looking at my reflection in the mirror.

Suddenly I remembered the instructions to wash my hands and go downstairs. I washed quickly, enjoying the fragrance of the scented toilet soap, then made my way downstairs – a voyage of discovery, for with every step I became aware of beautiful fittings and furnishings.

When I found the kitchen (another amazing sight) I thought I was dreaming and would wake up with a start any moment. Various gadgets, so clean and sparkling, were everywhere I looked. I was dumbfounded.

“Here is your supper, Doreen, and this is where you will eat your meals.”

The good lady soon saw I had brought my appetite, if little else. She disappeared again. I enjoyed the fine meal, but it was rather eerie eating all alone in such a large kitchen. Fortunately my new employer returned before I finished my meal. Despite the strange beginning I somehow felt that everything would be all right.

When the lady had been told (probably by my good friend, the captain) that the new maid was from a poor neighbourhood, she had not anticipated a little girl in such obvious need. She herself had come from a prosperous family and married well. Her husband was a very successful businessman, and she had never known what it is like to go without. Now she was faced with a poor, neglected child of fourteen. It is not surprising therefore, that she hardly knew how to instruct me as to my duties.

But she put me at ease. I was beginning to like her already.

She drew up a chair and sat beside me.

“I expect you would like to know something about your work. You must always call me Madam and my husband Sir.”

She must have seen the look of resentment on my face and quickly went on to say that my wages would be twelve shillings and sixpence a week, payable on my first half-day, a Thursday. I must have looked very pleased and interested in that detail, because that is how I felt. Madam gave me a general idea of my duties and added some timely encouragement.

“You will soon learn, Doreen. Don’t be too impatient.

Now, Doreen, do you have a night dress?”

“No Madam.”

“Oh well I think I can find you one for tonight. Tomorrow we’ll fix you up with new clothes and shoes.”

“Oh thanks, Madam! Thank’s very much!”

I spent my first night in that marvellous house in my own room, sleeping in my own real bed. It was like a fairy story come true.

Next morning I was awakened by someone knocking on the pink painted door of my room. I turned over to go back to sleep. Then I remembered that I was a maid, and I sprang out of bed.

I wondered if I was meant to wear one of the uniforms. My own clothes looked shabbier than ever. Eventually I dressed in my old clothes and made my way downstairs, where a lovely breakfast awaited me. I was thoroughly enjoying it when Madam appeared.

“We are going to London as soon as you are ready, Doreen. “

This prospect prompted me to conclude my breakfast quickly. I overheard a brief conversation between Madam and the daily cleaning woman, who had just arrived.

“She has come from the most appalling home and possesses nothing at all to wear. I’m taking her to London to buy her some clothes.”

The daily cleaning woman – a person of a rugged and cheerful disposition – came into the kitchen to meet me. She stared for a minute before speaking.

“Hello, Doreen. I’m Mrs. Hill, the daily help. I hope we’re going to be good friends.”

There was a suspicion of a wink. I hardly knew what to say and just looked polite.

Mrs. Hill had been helping for a long time, I was to learn later. She was mainly responsible for cleaning the bedrooms. My work was to clean

downstairs and to serve at table.

The household also boasted a cook, who was having a long week-end off duty when I arrived. I wondered how I would fit in with everybody.

Soon I was whisked away to London in Madam's big black car. She was driving and asked me lots of questions about myself. She seemed satisfied with my answers, if a little stunned. Although Madam had lived a somewhat sheltered life, she knew that honesty, rather than education, is of most value in a maid. I was completely honest with my answers.

We were soon in London. The car arrived at Harrod's just as it was opening. I was taken quickly in to the fashion department by a very embarrassed Madam. She was well known at the shop and every effort was made to please her.

Madam quickly explained the difficult situation to the department head, who concealed her surprise professionally and sprang into action. Quickly she organized her staff so that I could be fitted out in one department, thus saving Madam and me further embarrassment in going from one department to another.

I was completely bewildered by the sudden burst of activity on my behalf – people running back and forth with boxes and packages of every shape and size. Vests, petticoats, dresses, and other garments were brought to the private fitting room. I wasn't at all bothered what colour and style they were. After all, I had *never* before had new clothes.

Madam herself entered into the spirit of the unusual event. Indeed, it was as if the whole store had something of the spirit of Christmas. The experienced staff gave me smiles of encouragement as they ran back and forth with garments and suggestions for my transformation.

My old and shabby clothes were discreetly spirited away. I wore some of the new clothes and my new, shiny shoes, and the rest of the purchases were carried to the car. But the great adventure had not ended yet.

Madam took me to the hairdressing salon, where my hair was expertly washed and styled. When it was finished, I was invited to look at myself in the mirror. I was speechless, hardly able to believe that the bright, attractive person in the mirror was myself.

"What a transformation!" said Madam.

She was very pleased with the morning's work. As for me I thought I was dreaming and would wake up any moment to find myself on the heap of dirty coats in Uxbridge.

For a short time all who had played a part stood around me pleased with their work. Then with waves of good-bye from the staff Madam and the new maid left the famous store.

The ride home was punctuated with my profuse thanks to Madam, who seemed to be taken aback by such earnest gratitude. To make sure I did really own all those lovely things I continually turned round to gaze at the packages on the back seat of the car. I stroked my new coat and admired my new shoes. Yes, they were real enough. It was no dream. Life was not going to be so bad at all.

Back at Cowley, I met the cook. I liked her as soon as I set eyes on her. Cook and Madam helped me put on my maid's uniform – another thrilling experience.

My life as a domestic servant was to have its ups and downs. There were moments of despair for all concerned, but Madam and cook were determined to take the new maid in hand and make something of her.

In case all this sounds rather solemn, let me add that Cook later told me she had never laughed so much in her life as she did after my coming to Cowley.

## 6. The Stranger

ONE of my first tasks was to cut bread for the evening meal. Here at least was one thing I could do with comparative ease. Why, I must have cut hundreds of slices for my hungry sisters!

I set to work and placed the ample slices on the plate. Madam, with eyebrows raised in obvious amazement and some distaste, surveyed the mountain of door-step slices.

“What on earth do you think you call this?”

“Bread, of course – what yer asked for.”

I couldn’t understand why Madam didn’t like my healthy looking slices of bread.

“Now, Doreen, I’ll show you how to cut bread properly. Just get rid of those other slices.”

“You ain’t gonna chuck ’em out, are yer? My sisters will eat those.”

Madam looked surprised but said nothing. Cook, hovering in the background, tried unsuccessfully to conceal a grin, while I somewhat sulkily watched Madam instruct me in the art of bread-cutting.

After making a flop of my first job I was rather nervous about future tasks. I was willing and eager to learn but difficult to teach, and disasters followed.

Take the case of the hall floor. I was instructed to polish it. Working on the principle that the job was best performed by using as much polish and elbow grease as possible, I quickly turned the hall floor into something approaching a skating rink, and just as dangerous, as poor Madam soon discovered, almost slithering across the hall on a small rug.

“It’s far too dangerous, Doreen. You must scrub it all off and start again.”

“Scrub it all off? After all my hard work? No fear! Yer wanted it polished, yer got it polished. If yer fink I’m gonna scrub it all off now, yer got another fink coming!”

A long dialogue followed between Madam and the new maid with me using a few choice words from the back streets to express my feelings. Cook came from the kitchen to see what all the fuss was about, took one look, and hurried back to the kitchen, hardly able to restrain her laughter.

“You *must* do as you’re told, Doreen. Now see that the floor is scrubbed!”

With that Madam departed to safer places, while I had to do as Madam said, but not without protests in loud Cockney lingo.

Soap powder was a commodity unknown to me. I used it unsparingly in the tasks I was given. I wanted to make sure that the tea towels were really clean and white and once used half a packet of soap powder and half a bottle of bleach to wash just two tea towels. It's not difficult to imagine the result: soap suds everywhere and two tea towels that were a very sorry sight.

Madam and cook were patient, really, although it must have been very difficult at times. Very often I would run into the garden or upstairs to my room, in tears or in hot indignation.

Not every job was a failure, though. Madam asked me If I could light a fire. I smiled, thinking, "I'll show 'er."

"Yer give me the sticks and the coal, mate, and I'll soon show yer."

"You must call me Madam, not Mate," said Madam very quickly.

"All right! All right! I heard yer!" I shouted.

It was not long before I had a fire blazing halfway up the chimney. Madam and cook congratulated me, even if the huge fire did look a bit dangerous.

Life at Cowley, then, was a mixture of disasters, tears, arguments, and a few successes during my early days. But what had been a well-ordered household was turned into a kind of chaos. The advent of this Cockney waif certainly added colour to the otherwise placid scene. Neither Madam nor her husband, neither the cook nor the daily cleaner had ever met anyone like the new maid, who caused so much concern, shock, frustration, and amusement all in a few days.

When I was sent into the other rooms to work, I was half afraid to touch anything for fear of breaking the lovely ornaments. Why they needed all those rooms puzzled me. At home in Uxbridge there were only two rooms downstairs, and both of them would have been lost in one of the large rooms at Cowley. Life was certainly different here.

The cook was a good friend to me and helped me no end but there were times when I felt lonely and lost in this large well-run house. I missed my sisters very much.

The cook had been with the family for some eight years. She looked as every good cook should – plump, with a round pink face that was always cheerful and bright. Cook and I shared our meals in the kitchen. I had never

been so well fed, for cook always saw that I had plenty to eat. We talked freely together, and I always made her laugh.

She at all times looked neat and clean, never seeming to get her large pinafores dirty, whereas mine were very dirty and creased after a half-hour's wear – much to Madam's despair.

Cook's advice was simple enough: "Always look on the bright side. We have much to be thankful for."

I tried to take the good advice, but so many things kept going wrong, no matter how hard I tried.

Madam made an attempt at teaching me to wait on the table at mealtimes, but decided to postpone this aspect of my work until I was better trained.

Answering the door, however, was another matter, a task that even this unpredictable young lady could manage without anything going wrong (Madam thought). But Madam was wrong. I managed to make a mess of even that simple task.

One evening I was told that guests were coming. I was to welcome them politely when they arrived at the front door and show them to the drawing room.

When the doorbell rang, announcing the arrival of visitors, I went to answer. Cook stood at the half-open door of the kitchen, hidden from view, to listen how I got on.

I opened the door very quickly and said in a very loud voice: "Come in – and wipe yer feet."

The two guests stared at me and stepped somewhat gingerly inside.

"Give us yer coats then," I said, "an I'll 'ang 'em up."

They did so in stunned silence.

I announced the guests by flinging open the drawing room door and saying in loud Cockney tones, "'Ere they are, then."

I thought Madam looked rather strange. I marched back to the kitchen where to my amazement I found cook doubled up in fits of laughter, tears rolling down her pink cheeks.

"What's up with yer?" I asked.

Cook could not answer for laughing.

"I ain't done nothing wrong, have I?"

Cook only laughed all the more.

Madam was soon on the scene. If cook thought my performance funny, Madam certainly didn't. I, who had only been my natural self, couldn't



understand what all the fuss was about. Cook, still in fits of laughter, fled upstairs to her room to recover. Apparently Madam objected (among other things) to having her guests told to wipe their feet.

At long last Thursday came round, and I was to have my first half day – and first wage packet.

“You are now free until tomorrow morning,” said Madam, “but you must be back here no later than ten o’clock tonight.”

“Oh, thanks, Madam!” I gasped.

Eyes shining with pleasure, I rushed upstairs to count my money: a whole clean ten-shilling note and a gleaming half-crown. Never had I owned so much. No wonder I felt like a duchess.

“Cor!” I thought, “won’t I show ’em back at Uxbridge what a success I’m now!”

In my nice new clothes, money in my pocket, I set off proudly down the road to the railway station. The journey by tram to Uxbridge lasted a matter of minutes. When I alighted, everything felt and looked different to me – cleaner, fresher. Could it have been Sunday, only four days ago, that I’d left the town for my new position? It seemed like years.

I bought sweets for my sisters and sat down in a cafe to relax with a cup of tea. I was experiencing a new sense of self-awareness. Something strange and indefinable had entered my life.

Quite suddenly I thought of cigarettes. I was no stranger to smoking. From the age of eight I had picked up fag-ends from the gutter and smoked them when no one was around

Sometimes I stole tobacco from my father’s tobacco tin and rolled my own, merely copying others. Everyone, including children on the grimy estate, liked a fag. While I was in service at Cowley I had never even thought of smoking. Now that I was back in Uxbridge, the link with the past perhaps prompted my next action.

I bought my first packet of cigarettes at the counter and returned to my table, where I lit one. It was a very pleasurable sensation. No one seemed to care or have the slightest interest that this young girl was smoking.

“I’m really grown up,” I thought. “I really can do what I like and go where I please.”

When I left the cafe, I made my way to the council estate where I had spent so many unhappy and lonely years. At least I would see my sisters again. But my sisters, playing in the recreation ground, did not at first

recognize me. Indeed I had to call their names several times before they gasped, “Hey! It’s Dor! It’s Dor!”

They bounded over with shrieks of delight. I took them up in my arms, overjoyed to see them – dirty faces and uncombed hair notwithstanding. It was wonderful to hear them talking all at once. My heart was filled with a deep and tender love for them all. I had missed those lovable rascals more than I realized.

Spellbound by my appearance, they finally took my hands and together we marched proudly down the road to my old home. As the procession proceeded, so it grew. All the gangs of children followed me.

The neighbours came to their doors to stare at the transformed Doreen. I stopped to tell them of my new life and, understandably, showed off more than a little. I was the centre of attraction that afternoon.

When I reached our down-at-heels house, my father was out. Black Arrow was speechless when I walked in with my lovely clothes and new shoes. Finding it impossible to stay inside the house, which now seemed dark and cramped, I walked around the estate, followed by my friends, the gang, and my sisters – just like the old days.

“Will yer take us back with yer, Dor?”

“Can we come and live with yer, Dor?”

They seemed to think their old leader had found a fairyland castle or a limitless chest of treasure.

At last my father arrived home. I realized I still loved him, but he showed no interest in me, just surprise that I bothered to return home at all. I wanted to ask if anyone had news of my real mother, but the question remained unasked.

I began to feel strangely out of place. As the hours passed, the stares seemed to turn into glares of resentment.

“I think I’ll go to the pictures now,” I told the gang of children.

The return home had turned into an anti-climax. As I sat alone in the cinema my thoughts were racing. Smoking cigarette after cigarette, I was hardly aware of the events projected on the screen before me. Over and over I felt I was a stranger to the people on the estate.

“I don’t belong to the family anymore. I’m a stranger.”

The word stranger sent a chill through me – a sense of emptiness. I had wanted to leave home, I had wanted to be free. Now I was – yet not free, for I was bound up in a new inner emptiness and loneliness.

“If it wasn’t for my sisters, I’d never go home again,” I thought.

But where would I go, if not there? I knew no one else.

As I walked to the station, my steps seemed to say, “I’m a stranger. I’m a stranger. I don’t belong anywhere. I’m a stranger. “

Awful depression gripped me as I walked alone back to the large house where I was employed.

“Did you have a nice half-day, dear?” cook asked.

I could only nod my head at what had been a shattering experience.

## 7. Departure

“YOU’RE very silly to waste your money on cigarettes,” said cook, unusually serious. “If Madam catches you smoking in the kitchen, there’ll be serious trouble.”

“That’ll be no change,” I sniffed. “I’m always in trouble anyway.”

Although I later confined my smoking to my bedroom whilst in the house, the habit was soon discovered by Madam. Neither she nor cook knew of the depression I was suffering. If they had known, perhaps they would have understood why I smoked so much.

Madam’s attempts to create an efficient maid from the small bundle of humanity that had arrived at her doorstep continued. I was learning fast, although I continued to make the most awful mistakes.

Also, I was getting to know the two children. From the beginning Madam had been careful to keep the two children well out of my way, perhaps because of my occasional verbal explosions. She didn’t wish the children to pick up bad language. The parents were not always successful, however, according to the occasional giggles outside the kitchen door. The sounds of scurrying feet would follow as the children were shooed away by a perturbed father or mother.

I got to know the children better one memorable evening. Madam decided to leave them in my care whilst she went out for the evening with her husband. Cook was having the evening off.

The children, as full of mischief as any of the back-street kids, decided to take full advantage of the situation. They complained they were hungry and begged me to give them something to eat. I led them to the larder to let them choose what they liked, and there was plenty to choose from. Helped by me, they got through a whole chocolate cake just baked by cook, some currant buns, some fruit, plus three bottles of pop.

We had a wonderful time together, chatting and laughing and getting to know each other better. The children knew that helping themselves to food was strictly forbidden, but I was completely innocent about the whole affair, thinking it was perfectly all right.

The next day Madam and cook missed the food from the larder and found the empty pop bottles. The children were closely questioned, and the whole

adventure was blamed onto me. Madam was very angry, and I was really in trouble.

My anger blazed as I shouted, "If the little perishers wanted something to eat, why can't they? Yer can afford it, can't yer?"

"I suppose you had your share too, Doreen," said Madam quickly. "Well, so what if I did! I'm fed up with yer and this place.

And yer can take a week's notice." I had got slightly tongue-twisted and was acting as if I were firing an inefficient employer. Cook, who was never far from mirth when I was around, roared with laughter. But I didn't think it funny. I was off upstairs to pack. Cook followed me, then Madam, then the children.

"You mustn't be too harsh on Doreen, Madam," said the cook. "She's had a hard life."

Then the children pleaded with Madam not to let me leave.

I was quite a hit with them, it seemed. They later confessed it was their fault, and so the whole affair blew over and was soon forgotten.

My employer was a very patient lady. Any lack of understanding on her part stemmed from the relatively sheltered life she'd lived. The truth was I often felt like a caged bird. Since I had never been accustomed to any kind of discipline, my outbursts would occur – like the day Madam came into the kitchen to give me some small instruction.

I was depressed and turned on poor madam, shouting,

"Oh, for God's sake shut up and get out of my kitchen!" Poor Madam was so dazed that she retreated, but I soon learned that Madam was still the boss. She continued to correct me when necessary. One morning about six weeks after my appointment as the new maid I came downstairs to find Madam, somewhat ashen in appearance, preparing breakfast. It was past seven o'clock, but there was no sign of cook.

"Where's cook?" I asked.

There was no reply, and I repeated my question. "Doreen," she said very gently, "cook died in her sleep."

"Dead!" I stared at Madam in disbelief. "She can't be dead! You must be mistaken, Madam."

Poor Madam, who was obviously shaken herself, had a difficult time trying to convince me it was true. Madam had gone to cook's bedroom when she failed to come downstairs.

"She died in her sleep, Doreen. It was very peaceful."

“Now, Doreen,” went on Madam, “I want you to be a good girl and help me by being very quiet. I’m expecting the doctor any minute.”

“Why call the doctor if she’s dead?”

I was puzzled. I cannot recall Madam’s reply. She had difficulty calming me down. Everyone, including me, crept around the house in silence. It wasn’t until hours later, when I was alone in the large kitchen, that the tears began to flow. The awful realization struck me that my good friend cook would be there no more. Everything in the room reminded me of her: her favourite chair, her knitting, her extra apron still hanging near the stove.

Cook, dear cook, my good friend, was gone. Whatever would it be like without her? The gap left by cook, loved member of the household, could never be filled.

Life went on, as life must. Cook was never replaced, and I was relieved. A new cook would have seemed like a usurper. Who knows? – Madam’s decision not to get a new cook may have been because she saw the sadness in my face.

Now Madam did the cooking, helped by Mrs. Hill and sometimes by me. I liked cooking and learned a lot from the very patient Madam. She taught me to bake cakes, bottle fruit, and other useful things.

My half-days were spent in Uxbridge, where my appearance continued to cause ripples of excitement among the younger children. But I had no friends of my own age.

In my wanderings around the town I noticed that people were unwilling to speak or even smile – they were so preoccupied with their own lives. Often I would spend a half-day off in Uxbridge without speaking to one adult person.

Once or twice I visited the mission hall in Waterloo Road, but here too there was no communication, perhaps because on my solitary half-day a week there was seldom anyone around.

Often when children reach the school-leaving age and drop into a very busy world, they are lost in the great swirl. This happened to me, and it was a pity. Had a perceptive Christian befriended me or even written an occasional letter, I might have been won for the Saviour at this time.

Like most girls of my age, I began to dream about having a boy friend and getting married. It would be so wonderful to have someone who really loved me! I was growing up both mentally and physically.

In an attempt to meet young people of my own age and perhaps to acquire that Prince Charming of my dreams, I went to dances instead of the cinema. I was a little shy at first but I was so full of life it wasn't difficult to find boy friends. I became known as a girl who was fun.

Servicemen from the nearby RAF station went to the dances to acquire a girl friend. They were usually not slow in boasting about their casual romantic conquests. I had no illusions about the motives of some of the RAF servicemen. All I wanted was company.

As a small child I had seen and heard many things pertaining to sex. Acts of life were facts of life to me. In the neighbourhood in which I had grown up sex had no religious overtones, and marriage was sometimes a matter of convenience. I learned the facts of life by observing them.

Casual relationships with the opposite sex were nothing unusual, so I had no inhibitions. Furthermore, there was always the possibility that one of these men might really love me and I would live happily ever after in true story-book fashion.

I thought my search had ended at last when I met a young and handsome man who was also kind and considerate. For the first time in my life I fell head-over-heels in love.

My entire outlook was transformed overnight. Everything was wonderful – even the housework. There suddenly emerged a bright and shining Doreen. All my loneliness disappeared.

My head-in-the-clouds romance ended suddenly after three weeks, and I came back to earth with a painful jolt. My handsome boy friend informed me he was already engaged to be married. My whole world collapsed, and I thought I would die of a broken heart.

Time was the healer. . .

Why should some people have so much money and others so little? – this was the big question that now occupied my thoughts.

“It's all unfair,” I thought.

Bitterness was filling an empty heart. A great chip was growing on my young shoulders. And I began to think that the acquisition of a lot of hard cash would bring me the happiness I was searching for.

I decided to ask Madam for a rise. I thought that then I could save enough to run away to London, where I could earn a lot of money and get nice clothes and new friends. The wage claim was still in my mental pipeline when another incident occurred to astonish Madam and diminish

me. It all centred around the telephone, an instrument that I regarded with a mixture of fear, awe, and suspicion.

One day Madam decided it was time her new maid overcame that fear. Patiently, carefully she explained how the telephone should be answered. Then she declared the next time the telephone rang I was to answer it.

A little later the telephone rang. Madam called to me: "Go on, Doreen, pick it up and answer as I've told you." Then she added: "If it is only Mrs. Winters, tell her I'm not at home." I gingerly picked up the telephone, as if it were a stick of dynamite with a very short time-fuse. I repeated the number on the dial, just as Madam had instructed.

"This is Mrs. Winters here," began a voice at the other end of the line. "Oh! Is it?" I interrupted quickly. "Well, Madam told me to tell you she ain't in today!" With a mixture of relief and amazing confidence I slammed down the receiver on a very indignant lady. Madam nearly exploded. Needless to say, she never again asked me to answer the telephone.

Later I felt very silly. After all, if I had been more careful with the telephone, I could have asked for that pay-rise. It was no use asking Madam now. I would have to save harder. London was my destination – the city that must be full of opportunities for young girls like me with ambition. Somehow I thought that my mere arrival in London would change my life for the better. I could hardly wait for my savings to grow.

When I believed I had saved enough to make my journey, I packed my case and left without telling Madam or anyone else that I was going. I boarded the train at Uxbridge with various emotions flooding my being. No one paid any attention to this tragic form with the grim look of determination on her young face.

Sad to say, the story is repeated today-so many teenagers, lonely and bewildered, running away from home, turning their sights toward London. Sadder still to think that often there is no one to care what happens to them once they arrive in that huge city all alone.

Little did I realize what awaited me at the other end of the line.



## 8. Streets of Paddington

THE possessions I carried with me to Paddington, London, were many more than those I had nine months earlier, when I trudged from my home in Uxbridge to the job in Cowley. But this time there was no job waiting for me. Furthermore, there was no bed in which to sleep.

I had been reared on uncertainty in the school of hard knocks; therefore I wasn't too discouraged. Best thing, I thought, was to think the whole matter through over a meal in a cafe. But I was no nearer solving the problem when I'd finished my meal.

Gullible as ever, I expected London to be a beautiful place. I was rather like Dick Whittington, who believed the London streets were paved with gold. After gaping in shop windows in the main shopping centre I wandered down the side streets. I was disappointed in what I saw: dark alleyways, blackened buildings, and semi-derelict houses in dirty narrow streets stretched as far as the eye could see.

"Why, it's worse than the estate at Uxbridge," I thought. There was no turning back now. I stopped several people hurrying along the shadowy road and asked where lodgings could be found. Only one person stopped to give any helpful information – a woman who directed me to a large house in a nearby side street. A room in the house was offered after I paid a week's rent in advance.

It was a gloomy room, barely furnished, and the brown wallpaper was peeling from the damp walls. Compared with the warm and pretty room I had left a few hours ago in Cowley, this was a real comedown.

I sat on the rickety bed and looked around. The place could always be cleaned up.

"I've had plenty of training for that," I said to myself.

Actually the large house was a hive of bedsitters. Hearing loud laughter from the next room, I decided to investigate. My knock on the door was greeted by a cheerful "Come in, love," and further laughter.

"Er, I'm looking for a bucket and some soap and a scrubbing brush, to clean my room with."

The girls stared at me, then at one another, and giggled.

"I wouldn't bother about it, deerie," said one of the three girls. "It's not worth it."

“Leave the kid alone!” interjected the apparently senior member of the trio. Judging from the appearance of the room I had entered, I might just as well have asked for a chandelier. Much to my surprise the articles I had asked for were found – rather battered but usable.

“Thanks a lot,” I said and retreated.

I heard them laughing again as I returned to my room. The sound of my scrubbing must have touched a chord of conscience, for one of the girls entered carrying a cup of tea. My room looked much cleaner, but I didn’t. I was filthy.

“Here you are, love. You deserve it,” said my good neighbour.

“Cor, thanks! I could do with that.”

“You’re new here, aren’t you? I saw you arrive.”

“I’ve run away from my last job. I was a domestic servant. My name’s Doreen.”

“Well, I’m Brenda, and there’s six of us living here. Well, you’re the seventh. Lucky seven. Maybe you’re lucky for someone, Doreen.”

Brenda and I exchanged further personal details. As I told Brenda my life’s story with gusto, the other girls crept in. Brenda, who was ten years older than I, did most of the talking when my story was finished.

“I’m on the game, see?”

“On the game?” I was puzzled.

“You know – we go with fellers at night for money. There’s plenty of money on the game. The men pay up all right.” The other girls nodded in agreement.

“Who wants to slave at work all day,” said one of the other girls. “We’re independent. We get all we want.” They certainly possessed good clothes and jewelry. My eyes opened wide in amazement. I had never before met a self-confessed prostitute. I carefully noted they regarded the game in strictly commercial terms. Morality didn’t come into it.

“Well,” I sighed, “I’ve only been a domestic servant and I don’t want to do that again.”

“You don’t have to, love. You’re young and quite nice looking. You could make a lot of money with us on the game.”

“I’ll think about it, Brenda, and I’ll let you know in the morning.”

When they at last left my room, I did think about it. After all, I reasoned, that’s why I came to London – to make plenty of money. If the men wanted to part with their money for a bit of fun, what harm was there in that? And

the girls seemed happy enough living that way. They at least took an interest in me – something no one had done before.

Not all the prostitutes had come from a poor and unhappy home as I had. Not all of them had been denied the love and care of their parents. But all seemed to have one thing in common: loneliness. All were looking for happiness and considered money the key to that happiness.

This is the way many prostitutes reason, never realizing the many hidden dangers and risks of such a life, none so attractive as the money. Disappointments and let-downs (especially let-downs by men) push other women along the same path: bitterness and loneliness, too, and an urge to hit back at society. All these things put together had certainly been mine.

Thus it was that I too, as a lonely fourteen-year-old, joined the ranks of the women of the twilight. I entered the world's oldest and most shameful profession.

The very next evening I accompanied Brenda on the streets of Paddington. I saw how easily she attracted men. She simply walked along swinging her hips, jangling a bunch of keys. It wasn't long before a man approached. Terms were quickly settled.

"Two pounds," I heard Brenda say.

The man nodded, and they both disappeared.

It looked easy, but I was far less experienced and much younger. Brenda had given me some hints and guidance on charges, contraception, and dangers to avoid. How would I fare?

The first time I ventured out alone I was very nervous indeed. Walking along the edge of the pavement, I jangled my keys. My heart thumped with every step I took, and I tried hard to act as if I were an old hand on the game.

I need not have worried about getting a start. Young as I was, I didn't have to wait long before a man drew up in his car. Taking a deep breath, I launched out on my new career.

My confidence grew as the weeks went by. I soon had plenty of money. I too had plenty of pretty clothes. Most important to me, I had plenty of friends, all of whom followed the same way of life.

I was an entertainer par excellence, full of fun and ready to exercise my quick wit. Little wonder that I was popular with other girls and older women on the streets of Paddington. Even the streetwalker has need of a laugh and some good clean fun.

Many of the girls, including myself, had a spirit of freedom, joy, and love. They had hearts of gold and would never see anyone treated badly. They would give away their last penny if they knew anyone in real need.

In spite of everything, real happiness still eluded me. But I never spoke of my frequent depression to the other girls. Then came my first encounter with the Salvation Army. As I walked along the familiar street I noticed an open-air meeting being conducted by the local Salvation Army corps. A young girl in army uniform was singing unaccompanied, and her voice sounded as sweet as a bird's. I was arrested by her words as she sang:

*My Father is rich with houses and lands.  
He holdeth the wealth of the world in His hands.  
Of rubies and diamonds, of silver and gold,  
His coffers are full; He has riches untold.  
I'm a child of a King, I'm a child of a King.  
With Jesus my Saviour I'm a child of a King.*

The singer's face, serene and joyful, gripped my attention. I suddenly knew that with all my easy money I was poor in comparison. She seemed so contented to stand there and sing. She was a child of a King.

"Well, what's the use? It's too late to change now. It's all right for them. They're nice people, but I'm a common prostitute. "

Somewhat sadly I continued on my way. Like so many people today, I thought Christianity was a matter of being good rather than being made good. Although I became preoccupied with "the game", I never forgot that Salvationist singer. That short encounter was a memorable occasion in the hard pilgrimage of my life.

I later changed my name (it was easier to change one's name than one's life). I called myself Michelle in my professional activities, and my bank balance was growing. Brenda and I were now firm friends. We often moved from the Paddington streets to other parts of London. My leanings towards mischief had hardly diminished – anything for a laugh. I threw soap powder and red dye into the fountains at Trafalgar Square, nearly getting caught in the process.

Because prostitution is illegal, I always had a wary eye open for the law. In fact, I became quite an expert at dodging the vice squad, but I never underestimated them. I knew how far to go in my daring.

Not so easily avoided, however, were my feelings of guilt as far as my little sisters were concerned. Long ago I had lost touch with the family at Uxbridge, but I often wondered how my sisters were getting on. Had my real mother ever returned?

Staring at the wall and preoccupied by such thoughts, I felt guilt and emptiness descend on me like a heavy, stifling blanket. Often I would shake my head and in a determined way push the guilty thoughts away, as far as I could.

One day Brenda and I went to Soho in the West End of London. Soho was to me the ultimate in pleasure and glamour. The sights and sounds intoxicated me. We walked aimlessly around the busy streets, but I was ready for some fun.

Suddenly I stopped to read a notice displayed in a shop window; MODEL WANTED, APPLY UPSTAIRS.

“Hey look, Brenda,” I said. “Shall we go up just for a laugh?”

“I daren’t. I’m past being a model. But I’ll come with you if you want to have a go.”

“Okay! I should have brought my ostrich feathers.”

I joked and giggled almost every step of the way upstairs.

A similar notice was tacked to the door. I knocked loudly, and Brenda and I stifled a further giggle. We were received by two men in loud flashy clothes. They looked at me with keen, appraising eyes. An odd interview followed, the men taking my measurements accompanied by a few cheeky remarks from me.

I was told then to walk around the room. Not taking the interview too seriously – after all I only went up for a bit fun – I laid it on a bit thick. Next I was asked to dance to a record.

“Just move any way you please,” said one of the men as he placed the record on the player. My performance was, to say the least, slightly hilarious, but the two men laughed in approval, not derision.

“Have you ever stripped before?”

I stopped dancing; slightly out of breath.

“Plenty of times – but it depends on what yer mean.”

“In a proper club, to music.”

“No, but now I see what kind of model yer mean.”

“We like you. You move well, you’ve plenty of life, and you’re cheeky – just what the customers like.”

“You’re on the game, aren’t you?” asked the second man.

“What if I am?”

“Oh, nothing. You’ll find this an easier way of making money. The job’s yours if you want it.”

I stared in astonishment.

“Well, to tell yer the truth, we only came up for a laugh, didn’t we, Brenda?”

“You take the job, you lucky thing,” Brenda advised. “I wish I had the chance, but I’m a bit old for it now.”

“Right. When do I start?”

“Tonight. But you’ll need a stage name, something that suits you. What is your name, anyway?”

“Doreen.”

“No, that’s not glamorous enough.”

“Well,” piped up Brenda, “she’s daring, if that’s any help.”

I used my imagination.

“How about Daring Diana?”

“That’s it! That’s fine. It suits you. Daring Diana,” the man chuckled.

He then explained that I was to report to the strip club that very evening to watch the routine of the strippers. I walked down the stairs with Brenda in a state of amazement. Within a mere half-hour after seeing the advert in the shop window I was a striptease artiste (or very nearly).

It had been so easy – like prostitution. Not difficult at all. Straightforward and simple. Yes, straight forward into a life far more degrading than the one I had known, which was bad enough. How true it is that Satan can make the way so very easy. Once someone has started on the downward path, the way farther down is smoother still.

That night, instead of walking abroad in search of men, I sat watching a young girl doing her act in a Soho club. A keen observer, I carefully noted the way she moved. It seemed easy enough.

It wasn’t long before I learned how to strip off my clothes to slow music. I was instructed to be as provocative as possible. Thus Daring Diana became part of a non-stop strip show, one of the dozens of such performances in the clubs of the area.

Eight girls worked on a shift system in the club which featured Daring Diana. A nude photograph of the new star was displayed outside the club to

lure the men in from the streets. Once inside the club, the men were persuaded by the girls to buy expensive drinks.

For this nimble-minded Cockney kid the new life was a push-over. I was earning far more money than ever before. Prostitution was far more profitable too. I left Paddington back streets and rented a large flat in Mayfair. This meant I could charge more for my favours.

Soho was for me the best place on earth – plenty of clothes, money and jewelry. I even employed a cleaner to look after the flat. Now I was the Madam, in more ways than one.

“I’m really going up in the world,” I thought.

In actual fact I was sliding downhill as fast as I could go.

## 9. Road to Prison

“WHAT am I doing in a dump like this? Is this what I was born for?”

These questions arose, sometimes right in the middle of my strip-tease act. Amidst the roars of appreciation from my audience I often felt completely alone. While my fame as Daring Diana spread through Soho, the softness that had been part of my nature was slowly disappearing. Soho and all the glamour had failed to bring the real happiness I yearned for. Despite the big money I received, I hated the life. But no one guessed it, as I lived up to my reputation of being good for a laugh – even if that laughter was hollow and empty.

“Coming to the party tonight, Diana?”

The invitation came from one of the girls of the strip club. Her wild parties were always good fun. ““Course I’m coming, and make sure there’s some nice fellers there!” I was the first to arrive at my friend’s flat and began to sort out some good records from the stack in the corner of the room (loud music was essential background for any party). I came across a very old and unusual record at the bottom of the pile and put it on the turntable. A man’s clear voice began to sing:

*I have lived a life of sin in this world I’m living in.  
I have done forbidden things I shouldn’t do.  
I asked a beggar along the way if he could show me where to stay,  
Where I could find real happiness and love that’s true.*

*Across the bridge there’s no more sorrow,  
Across the bridge there’s no more pain.  
The sun will shine across the river,  
And you’ll never be unhappy again.*

As I listened some of the old softness returned, some of the old wistfulness came back. A sense of remorse filled my heart.

“I wonder where the bridge is,” I was thinking. “I wonder where the river is. I would like to know where true happiness can be found.”

Somehow, somewhere, I felt, I had missed the turning that led to real happiness and contentment. But then the party began, and I put on my usual



act of the good-time party girl who kept things alive.

As the weeks passed I became harder and very often suffered bouts of severe depression. Also I was rapidly becoming a heavy drinker and got through over forty cigarettes a day.

At the bar one day, where I'd just emptied my glass, a man drew up a stool and sat beside me. He looked vaguely familiar.

"You look fed up today," he said.

"Yes, I am."

"Try one of these then." He offered me a hand-rolled cigarette.

"No thanks. I prefer my own brand."

"You feel fed up, don't you? this will make you feel better. Of course, they're a bit more expensive than the ordinary kind, but they're worth every penny. Why don't you try one?"

I idly took the cigarette, and he watched carefully as I lit it and inhaled. A wave of contentment flooded through me within minutes.

"Whatever is it?" I asked.

"It's a reefer. Makes you feel good, doesn't it?"

"Yes. Can I have some?"

"Sure, as many as you like, and there's plenty more where these came from."

I wasn't interested in where they came from. They made me feel good, and that's all that mattered to me.

I took six reefers and paid the man fifteen bob for my first batch of drugs.

The man smiled and left. He was a pusher, and this encounter was undoubtedly well planned – as was his follow-up strategy some weeks later.

"I can offer you something better than reefers, Diana."

I was very interested, even though there was an element of mystery about his invitation to "follow me." I followed him down a small alleyway and into one of the many seedy bookshops of Soho. Nodding to the man in the shop, the pusher took me into a small room at the back.

"What's all the mystery?" I asked.

"Well, we don't want anyone to see, do we? Don't tell anyone, whatever you do, Diana."

I promised.

"It will mean a prick in the arm – nothing to worry about."

"Well, do it quick then," I said, rolling up my sleeve.

I turned my face away as he tied a tourniquet and quickly injected a shot of heroin in the main vein near my elbow. Within seconds I was high as the sky. I felt on top of the world. Indeed, I felt I owned it, floating on a cloud of happiness.

“It’s heroin,” the man explained. “Makes you feel even better, doesn’t it?”

“Yes,” I smiled stupidly.

For some hours I lived in a state of euphoria.

“At last,” I thought, “I’ve found the happiness I searched for.”

I was completely ignorant and totally unprepared for what was to follow. After several hours the happiness and contentment slowly ebbed away and were replaced by an intense, stark depression, far worse than anything I had ever known. I felt I was being pulled slowly and surely into a deep, dark, bottomless pit.

I couldn’t understand it at all. Why, only a short while ago I felt so happy. What was happening to me? I began to sob and sob uncontrollably, believing I was going mad and would die.

Hardly able to walk, I dragged myself to the club, where I was supposed to work that evening. The girls stared at me as I stumbled into the dressing room. They had seen this thing happen before only too often to other foolish girls like me. No one had thought to warn me of the danger of drugs.

Then *they* did a foolish thing: they ran to find the pusher. Had they sent for an ambulance or got me to bed and sent for a doctor – anything but run for the pusher – I would have been all right in time, given proper care. But then the police would have been informed, and the management preferred such authority outside the door.

By the time the pusher was found I was wailing hysterically, a crumpled, shivering heap on the floor. The pusher gazed coldly at the crumpled form.

“You’ll be all right. You just need some more dope. Got the money?”

Only after he was sure I could pay, did he give me another shot of deadly heroin.

I was hooked.

In such a simple way – hardly knowing what I was doing I became addicted to hard drugs. Just another junkie joined the ever increasing numbers who exist from one fix to another, who depend on the needle to get them through each awful day.

It happens today in towns and cities everywhere. Many young people rush headlong to an early grave, all because of that first fateful shot in the arm, or the first reefer. Some, like me, do it in ignorance of the dreadful aftermath. Others, not so ignorant, go straight ahead, regardless of many warnings, into a life of sheer hell. Only when it is seemingly too late do they realize the warnings were only too true.

I realized early that it was too late for me. As the days passed I became utterly dependent on drugs – and more deceptive.

At first I had plenty of money to pay for drugs, but my bank balance dwindled as the pusher, who knew that I was in his control, asked a higher price every time we met. He sold me a syringe and some needles and showed me how to give myself my own fix – often a bloody and dangerous business.

I was losing weight rapidly and could not help noticing my deteriorating appearance. My waist-long hair lost its shine and began to fall out, whilst my skin became shallow and pitted. My good looks, my sole asset, disappeared. Often I had to stay in bed with liver infections and other effects of heroin.

One day the boss of the strip club gave me an ultimatum:

“Get yourself right or get out.”

I was quite helpless. I knew only too well that I looked more like Deathly Diana than Daring Diana. I struggled through a few more appearances at the club before I was told to leave.

Jobless and faced with the daily problem of raising money for my drugs, I returned to prostitution. It wasn't an easy option. I must have looked like death warmed up – a very poor candidate for a good night out.

It was an awful ordeal, but what choice had I? It was drugs or die. I had to go onto the streets now, whether I wanted to or not. Believe me, I didn't – I was so ill.

What a picture of utter degradation I was, so steeped in shame and misery, with no one to care what became of me. All my friends had left me and would not lend me money. They knew only too well I could never repay them now that I was a junkie.

I wasn't the only one. I saw and met many others just like me – mere shadows of people drifting round the streets like scraps of wrecked ships tossed in by a tidal wave of destruction. They are the flotsam and jetsam of humanity, blown along by the winds of misfortune and depravity, seeking

shelter and rest from the cruel and bitter blows that life has dealt them – and finding none.

As I move down a silent, dusty street into the twilight zone, will you follow me? Let me take you behind the scenes and give you a glimpse into this twilight world.

It's a cold winter's evening. The few lamps down the gloomy back street throw out a dim, mellow light. There are not many people around. The bitter cold has driven everyone inside one of the many squalid public houses or dingy cafes. I stop for a moment to pull my thin coat around my pitifully thin form. The coat's not nearly thick enough to keep the chill wind from piercing through me, but it has to suffice. Only a few days ago the last of my clothes and shoes had to be sold for drugs, a little food, and rent. My eyes are dull but ever watchful for the would-be customer that may pass by.

After what seems like an eternity a man appears down a side street. Eagerly I approach him, hoping he will be kind and generous and give me a little money. He takes pity on me and slips me a few extra shillings.

Watch now as I make my way into one of the squalid public houses. I know there will be a fire there to warm my weary, cold body. Sitting huddled by the small fire, I wish I had no need to go out and repeat the whole procedure. I present a perfect picture of sadness, loneliness, and despair. What a pity that I must go through the whole bit again, but drugs are expensive, and a must.

A pathetic picture, isn't it? But oh, so very true. This person could be your daughter, your sister – or you.

Although great efforts are made today to reach those who are trapped as I was, many are not reached. We cannot brush aside scenes like these and pretend they don't happen. They don't go away if we close our eyes.

I became too ill for prostitution every night and turned to shoplifting. When I was a child in Uxbridge, it was "steal or starve." Now it was "drugs or die." I had no choice.

Shoplifting was not easily carried out. I lacked the old confidence I once possessed and drugs had slowed down my quick reactions. Every excursion into a store caused me to shiver and break out in perspiration.

I hated selling the stolen merchandise. It made me feel even more guilty than the original act of theft. The prices I received were far below the retail value of the goods, perhaps 25% on average. When I did my purchasing, the price of heroin continued to spiral upward.

Because I was not apprehended I began to think I was quite an expert at shoplifting. Perhaps my over-confidence was the reason why I was caught red-handed one day. It was a wonder I wasn't caught earlier, for I must have looked suspicious many times as I gave furtive glances over my shoulder.

Leaving a store one morning with stolen jewelry in my handbag, I was quite unaware I was being followed by a store detective. Suddenly a firm hand gripped my shoulder.

"Will you come with me, miss? I believe you have taken something without paying."

He was not bullying or rude. Indeed, he seemed a little sorry for the poor bundle of humanity he had apprehended. I walked silently back to the store and was taken to the manager's office, where in the presence of a policeman my handbag was searched.

In addition to the stolen jewelry my handbag contained a reefer. Now I faced further trouble. Although I was evasive, the police seemed satisfied with the notes he made. He told me to appear in court the following morning and warned me to arrive on time and not to try to run away.

I had never before been in court on a criminal charge. I hardly slept that night and smoked many cigarettes, trying to think of possible alternatives. It was no use running away. In any case, where could I run? The police would only find me in the end.

The courtroom was a cold, bare place. I was advised to plead guilty by a stranger who disappeared after delivering this piece of advice. Apart from the court officials the room was quite empty. This was a surprise to me. I imagined that the seats would be filled to capacity with staring on-lookers, but it seemed no one was interested in me or cared what happened to me.

In the dock I was faced by a row of unsmiling faces, which looked carved from stone. An elegant man in a pin-stripe suit stood up and read the list of offences. I was surprised that the police knew so much about me, more than I could remember disclosing in the store manager's office.

"Do you plead guilty to these offences?" the man asked.

"Yes," I replied quietly.

There was a long pause, interrupted only by the rustle of papers and a muffled discussion amongst the magistrates. The silence seemed to last an eternity. Tick-tock, tick-tock – even the clock on the wall seemed sombre, as if it were counting up my crimes as well as the seconds.

“You have admitted that you are guilty, and you are therefore committed to serve a three month’s prison sentence.”

I was stunned. PRISON! The word sounded like a death sentence.

The court officials slowly filed out of the courtroom.

“This way, dead” said a voice at my ear with some kindness. The policewoman at my side looked sad and sorry too. A black van stood in the courtyard. I was escorted into it, and the back door was firmly secured. Inside the van sat another policewoman. No words were spoken. “Condemned to three months in prison, and no one cares,” I thought.

When I look back at that time, I believe that God stepped in and allowed me to go to prison. I hesitate to think what might have happened had I continued unchecked on my old path. If drugs had not killed me, I could have ended up in the Thames. I now fully believe that God preserved me from a dreadful death.

At that time I could only think how uncaring everyone was. No one was concerned. No one. No words were spoken during the journey that day as the van sped down the road to prison. My destination? Holloway.

## 10. Prison and Cold Turkey

HOLLOWAY Prison loomed into view, stark and menacing, like a great grey monster eager to devour its latest victim. I shivered in apprehension, wondering what it would be like trapped inside its jaws.

Nameless fears engulfed me as I passed through the black studded doors and caught the sounds that are a prison's own: loud banging of doors, jangling of heavy keys, clashing of milk trolleys.

Silently, fearfully I followed the prison officer down a dark corridor and into the reception area. Everything was very impersonal and formal. Orders were given in crisp tones to "have a bath". Then, dressed in my shapeless prison dress and black leather shoes, I was taken to the prison doctor.

"Hmmm."

The doctor examined me carefully, taking note of my eyes and the telltale marks on my arms.

"You are an addict. Is that correct?"

"Yes, I am."

I wondered why he asked the question, since he had the records before him.

"You will be looked after in the hospital wing for a while." He gave a few instructions to the prison officer, and I was led away through a maze of corridors. My eyes were downcast, and I felt that invisible eyes were watching me with every step.

Clack! clack! clack! The sound of my heels on the floor sent weird echoes down the cold corridors. I shivered again. Keys jangled as doors were locked and unlocked. At last we reached the hospital wing.

Someone was screaming. The sound sent a cold shiver down my spine, and my fears mounted.

"This way."

The prison officer unlocked a cell door and ordered me inside.

I stood in the doorway for a moment, terrified. The officer gave me a definite push to get me inside and then slammed and locked the door. I was quite alone.

The floor, where I half fell, was thickly padded. It was not easy to walk or even stand on it. Padded to the ceiling, the walls had one small window, well out of reach and barred.

“Do they think I’m crazy or something? Why have they put me in here?” I thought.

The truth was I was to withdraw from drugs with no compensating medication. It was a terrible ordeal. I clearly remember the awful withdrawal symptoms which I suffered all alone, although I was watched through the spy hole in the door.

Delusions are very real indeed to the drug addict in the process of withdrawal. In my delusions the prison cell itself turned into an ugly monster that clawed at my body with hairy hands. When I screamed and kicked and fought the monster, prison officers rushed in to restrain me. I saw the officers as dragons, each with six heads. In my efforts to free myself from the monster’s grip I pulled at the padded walls.

Sleep was short, and I suffered horrible nightmares, waking in a cold sweat to begin my fight all over again. When in short moments of sanity I saw a face at the spy-hole in the door, I thought:

“They’ve come to see if I’m still alive.”

I cried to God to let me die.

“Let me die! Let me die!”

God never replied. I wondered if the Almighty could hear me through the padded walls.

During the three days of withdrawal, they brought me food on a plastic plate. In my wild behaviour I threw food, plate, tray, and all at the walls. As I began to recover I became aware that the cell looked worse than a pigsty. It literally stank.

I spoke aloud: “Oh, my God! What a fool I’ve been! What good are drugs, money, clothes, and jewels now?”

It was a most awful experience. I didn’t think I would live.

The prison authorities had not encountered drug addiction on its present scale, and they used only one way to effect a cure. Even in the 1970s many say that “cold turkey,” as the prison’s method is called is the only realistic way of taking people off drugs like heroin or cocaine. But the suffering of the addict given this treatment is very terrible. Great care is certainly needed, or the patient will die.

After coming through the physical stage of withdrawal, I was taken out of my pigsty. I was very shaky and felt empty and dazed. As my footsteps echoed along the endless maze of corridors I vowed I would never again



touch drugs. Never would anyone see me stripping in a low-down club. I'd live a good life when I got out, I was thinking. I had learned my lesson.

"I must be good! I must be good! I must be good!" my footsteps seemed to say.

"I wish I were you, with all your youth," said one of the older prisoners, who seemed destined to spend most of her life in prison. "You can make a fresh start, but it's too late for me."

"A new start. Yes, that's what I'd like when I get out of here. Start again and make something of my life," I said to myself.

The older woman's words cheered me. While in prison I lost some of my bitterness. I saw many sad people with even sadder backgrounds than my own – if that can be imagined. Many of my fellow prisoners were alcoholics, shoplifters, prostitutes, and compulsive gamblers. A mixed and motley crew indeed – some as hard as nails and others somehow wistful. Deserving punishment, they were also in need of compassion and guidance.

All suffered from the same disease as I: loneliness. I tried to help them in my way by cheering them up – even though I too was in need of that tonic. I was well liked and called Cheerful Dor. It reminded me of the old days at Uxbridge, where I had been the leader of many neglected children. Strange how history repeats itself!

I had been allowed to take a few personal belongings to prison, and they were now given to me – not that I had many possessions left. Most had been sold for drugs.

My Sunday school prize, the *Golden Bells Hymn Book*, was one of my possessions. In my cell at night before the lights went out I would read the familiar hymns of childhood.

*Jesus, tender Shepherd, hear me.  
Bless Thy little lamb tonight.  
Through the darkness be thou near me.  
Keep me safe till morning light.*

I wondered, "What if the Sunday school teachers knew where I am now?"

The screws (prison warders) were usually regarded as the enemy, not to be trusted, but I saw that many of them had a genuine interest in the prisoners. Quite a few took a great deal of interest in me.

At long last my three months' prison sentence ended. Some prisoners were sorry to see me go, but they called out:

"Don't come back if you can help it!"

Don't come back! As I made my way down the corridors, again my footsteps tapped out a message. "Don't come back! Don't come back!"

Outside I looked at the grey stone monster of a prison and vowed I never would. I never did.

I walked away to search for the new life I'd resolved upon. Alas! I never found it. Once outside the prison walls I had no idea where to go or what to do.

My good intentions were blown to the four winds. The author now knows that one cannot "go it alone," without Christ's loving hand for guidance. One simply fails. As yet I had no Saviour to help me.

In the end I decided to look up my friends in Soho, and that was. that. Within a short time Daring Diana was on stage again. Worse still, I returned to drugs. I told myself I would be in control of the situation this time, but I was back where I started from. "Little lady of the road" was stamped all over my young face.

It was like playing with fire. So many misguided youngsters think as I did they are bigger than drugs, only to find to their sorrow they were mistaken. I was just a junkie again. The slippery path downhill was beneath my feet.

During this period of my life the Salvation Army stepped up their work in Soho. They sent young officers to do practical work among people in great need. I was aware of their presence everywhere I went. As they spoke sincerely and honestly of the love of God for all mankind, I stopped to listen. But not for long.

Had I not heard this before, long ago at Sunday school? It was as if the past came back to haunt me. On one hand I resented the message of the Salvationists, and on the other I envied them. They had qualities I secretly yearned for and they all seemed so happy.

"But it's not for me," I thought. "It's too late now." Sometimes after my performances at the strip club I would sit up in bed and read the hymns in my *Golden Bells Hymn Book*.

*Tell me the stories of Jesus.*

*Write on my heart every word.*

How simple the words were! I would close the book with a sigh.

“It’s all right for them,” I thought as I recalled the fresh, earnest faces of the young Salvationist officers, “but they have never lived my kind of life. “ It may seem incredible that someone like me – a night club stripper and a prostitute – was reading hymns in the early hours of the morning. But God moves in a mysterious way.

To conceal my true feelings and to make an impression on my friends, I would often ridicule the Army girls. “Salvation Army all gone barmy I” or “There goes Sister Anna carrying the banner.”

This sport made not the slightest difference to the Salvationists. If anything it made them more determined than ever. Maybe they knew that this girl was somehow touched by their message.

Always ready for a laugh, my friend (also a stripper and drug addict) and I went to the Salvation Army Hall one evening. We sat at the back, giggling and making remarks throughout the evening. One of the officers invited us to go forward and kneel at the penitent form while the congregation sang:

*Standing somewhere in the shadows  
You’ll find Jesus.  
He’s the only one who cares and understands.  
Standing somewhere in the shadows  
You will find Him,  
And you’ll know Him by the nail prints in His hands.*

We used to sing that in Sunday school. It was all getting too much for me, and I fled, laughing and trying to push the whole thing out of my mind. My friend and I, who were searching for a different kind of fun, may have been laughing, but I at least felt I had almost come face to face with God.

Early one morning, about two a.m., I felt a gentle tap on my shoulder as I emerged from the strip club, tired and rather depressed, for drugs were beginning to take their toll. I swung round to see the calm face of a Salvation Army girl. Oh, no, not again! I was in no mood for religion.

“Drop dead!” I said rudely.

The girl ignored my nasty remark.

“Jesus loves you, and He died for you.”

“Look!” I shouted at her. “Just leave me alone, will yer! Just get lost.”

“You are the one that’s lost.”

Her simple statement struck at my heart as surely as if it had been a well-aimed arrow. LOST! LOST! LOST! I fled down the street like lightning, leaving the Salvation Army girl standing outside the club.

I knew somehow she was right. I was lost. Lost in my own darkness. Lost in my loneliness.

It would be some years before the Saviour would find me and claim me for His own. Looking back at that night, I realize that a wonderful opportunity was opened to me. I missed it.

# 11. The Empire of Satan

TWO girls were standing together in the semi-darkness of the strip club, whispering in hushed voices. What was it that made these two girls so different from the others?

I had noticed them before. They were always together, never making friends with anyone else. A strange bond held them together. In fact, I never saw them apart. No one seemed to know very much about them.

Yes, there was something different about them – something eerie and strange. Curiosity was my constant companion and I decided to investigate.

Since the club was always in semi-darkness it wasn't difficult to creep up behind them and listen. Standing in the shadowy doorway of the dressing room, I listened carefully to the two whispering girls.

Although I was unable to hear much that was said, I heard something about the Satanists' temple. I held my breath. It was impossible to hear more. If I wanted to learn what they were saying, I would have to disclose my presence.

I stepped out from the shadows and said brightly, "What's all this about the Satanists' temples?"

The two girls were startled.

"We can't tell you anything about it. It's a secret."

"I gathered that," I sniffed, "but I would like to know." The two girls probably thought I had overheard the entire conversation. They looked at one another, and then one of them said, "If you promise never to say anything to anyone about it. . . ."

I agreed not to say a word.

"We are Satanists and worship at the temple of Satan."

"Can I come too?"

They again exchanged glances and then agreed.

"Be outside this club at six o'clock tomorrow, and we'll take you."

On the next evening I stood with bated breath at the appointed place. At six o'clock sharp a large black car drew up. The two girls were seated in the back. The driver instructed me to get inside.

"You will have to wear a blindfold, as this is the first time for you. No one must know where the temple is situated."

I had no objection. Indeed, the blindfold only added to the excitement. My heart was beating very fast.

The journey was soon over. I was led up a short flight of steps, and the blindfold was removed.

What I saw was astonishing and very mysterious.

I was standing at the back of a very large hall, filled with about five hundred people. A platform at the front was draped in black. On a throne-like seat sat a robed and hooded figure. His garments were embroidered with snakes, dragons, and flames of fire. Around him in a semi-circle stood some thirteen figures, also robed in black.

My first impulse as I took in the scene was to giggle, but because of the serious expression of the people I restrained myself. It was just as well that I did, for I had placed myself in a hazardous situation. The figures around the platform were the priests and priestesses of the order of Satanism.

My next impulse was to run away as far as I could, but I seemed to be glued to the spot.

The ceremony began. Priests and priestesses chanted in a strange rhythmic chant that grew louder and louder as the robed figure in the centre stepped down from the platform. Two of the priests removed his hood, and everyone bowed down and worshipped him, falling prostrate on the ground. I was just an observer, of course, and remained standing.

"That's the chief Satanist," one of the girls with me explained. "He must be obeyed at all times."

Unable to speak, I merely nodded and continued to watch in fascination.

"He represents Satan on the earth," said the girl, her voice trembling in awe.

Little did I realize that I had walked into the most ancient order of Satanism in the world.

"Watch, and listen carefully," said the girl again. "I will explain as the ceremony proceeds."

The whole congregation was now chanting prayers to the chief Satanist in that same strange rhythmic way. Everyone's eyes were on him. Priests and priestesses waited upon him as he kissed the vessels, the knives, and the emblem of Satanists that had been taken from the high altar.

"He is dedicating the temple and the vessels to Lucifer."

Suddenly the dim lights went out, and flaming torches were lit. For the first time I saw the effigies of Satan around the walls. They seemed to come

alive as the ceremony continued.

A white cockerel was brought in, and its neck was wrung right on the steps that led up to the throne and altar. Blood was everywhere. Then the cockerel was offered to Satan in sacrifice with more chants and prayers. Everything was done in the name of Satan, “Diablos,” and everyone was excited and in deadly earnest.

I was surprised to find the chief Satanist looking straight at me. It seemed as if his eyes were piercing right through me. I shivered.

The whole ceremony lasted some two hours. It had been an awesome, yet evil, experience.

The chief Satanist appeared at the back of the hall in street attire, and he” came over to me.

“Do you want to join us?” he asked.

“I don’t know. I was a bit frightened by it all.”

“There’s no need for fear,” he smiled.

I could not help noticing the admiring glances he was giving me.

“I hope to see you again at the next meeting,” he said and disappeared.

“He’s interested in you, Doreen,” said one of the girls.

“Yes. I wonder why.”

I was puzzled. He sought me out from among five hundred people. Why?

I learned the reason later. Search for talent and potential members was energetically pursued – perhaps more so than in Christian churches. Besides, once a person has actually been present at a ceremony as a mere observer, there is danger that the proceedings will be told abroad. Very often the site of the temple was moved elsewhere if there was any danger of its being discovered by outsiders. Secrecy is a must in the order.

I wasn’t sure that I would ever go again, yet some unexplained power drew me back to the next meeting. I had to be taken again as I didn’t know the exact location of the temple.

I witnessed all manner of evil scenes, far worse than the last. I was more than a little surprised at the seriousness of those present. Apparently they believed earnestly in all they were doing. Strangely enough, by the time the hideous meeting was over I was no longer afraid.

I was rather flattered too when the chief Satanist asked me to join him for a meal. I felt a little nervous, and he tried to put me at ease. It wasn’t long before I found myself telling him my life story. He didn’t seem in the least surprised when I told him I was a drug addict, prostitute, and strip-tease

artiste. Indeed, he seemed to know all about me. Probably one of the girls I'd seen in the club put him in the picture.

"All kinds of people are Satanists," he said. "From the high to the low – bankers, shopkeepers, teachers, nurses, prostitutes, drug addicts. There's no difference between us. We are here to promote Satan on the earth whenever and however we can."

He had a strong personality and had no difficulty in persuading me to become a Satanist. I was taught that evil – as most people think of evil – is not wrong, but right and good. It sounded stupid to me, as indeed it is, but I started to believe it.

The Satanists twisted and distorted everything. A lie, I was told, was in fact the truth. All very confusing, but many believed it – even intelligent people. It was a kind of brainwashing. If you are told the same thing over and over again, you finally come to believe it, no matter how stupid it sounds.

My friendship with the chief Satanist grew. I attended all the meetings at the temple minus blindfolds or secrecy. I was eager to become a full-fledged Satanist.

Taking that awful step was not simple. One has to learn the rules of Satanism and believe every one of them utterly. These are samples of the rules I had to accept and learn:

1. Secrecy is the keynote for all Satanists. They must never reveal the whereabouts of the temples to an outsider or the things that go on inside the temple.

2. All must love, honour, and obey without question the chief Satanist, who is Lucifer's representative on the earth. Satanists must follow Satan all the days of their life and serve no other but him.

3. Satanists must never enter a Christian church unless sent in to spy by the chief Satanist. All new ideas and fresh happenings are to be reported back in full to the chief Satanist at the temple of Satan.

4. Satanists must never read the Holy Bible for their own edification.

5. The Holy Scriptures are to be mocked and burned in the Satanists' temple, also prayer books and hymn books – in fact, all Christian literature must be destroyed. (This order dates back centuries. In contrast, various old writings by ancient chiefs are carefully preserved. Revelations from Hades, demons, and gods are often read in ritual worship in the temples of Satan.)



6. No one must arrive late at the temple. Punishment by whipping will be carried out on all latecomers by the chief Satanist in front of the whole congregation.

7. Lucifer must be highly esteemed in all situations, even while at work or in private. Lucifer sees, as he is with Satanists always, and he must be obeyed. Lying, cheating, swearing, free lust – even murder – are condoned.

8. Prayer to Lucifer must be made daily.

There are many more rules, and all who fail to obey them are punished by whipping in front of all Satanists at the temple. The whippings are carried out by the chief Satanist himself.

I soon learned the rules. Furthermore, I fully believed them.

The chief Satanist was by this time a regular visitor to the strip club, where I still worked. I was now his mistress. He would bring with him my supply of heroin and would accept no payment.

“It’s a gift,” he would say.

Some gift.

My addiction to hard drugs was just an extra one-way ticket to hell, yet drug addiction, stripping, etc. seemed to pale compared with Satan worship.

I asked no questions about the source of drugs. Although I was now his mistress, the chief Satanist didn’t care about my prostitution. He believed the more evil he condoned or achieved on earth, the greater would be his reward. If and when he died, he believed he would be in charge of legions of devils, so the greater the evil, the greater the reward.

One day he informed me, “You are now ready to become a sworn-in child of Lucifer.”

The ceremony would be complicated and lengthy. Many Satanists would be present, Satanists from other temples in England. When the time came around, about eight hundred or more Satanists were present, all punctual, since no one was ever late for any meeting.

I was dressed in a loose black robe, whilst hymns and prayers were chanted to the great god of darkness, death, and mystery. Flaming torches sent weird shadows racing across the walls and ceiling. The vessels on the high altar were dedicated one by one, and the silver knives kissed.

The chief Satanist rose from his throne and raised his hands, whereupon all, including also me, fell down and worshipped him. Two priests disappeared behind the black drapes at the rear of the raised platform and returned with the sacred white cockerel. Its neck was broken and split open,

and its blood caught in a silver cup. More chants and prayers to Satan followed. The air was heavy with evil.

The chief Satanist approached me and made an incision in my left arm, and my blood was caught in the cup that contained the blood from the slain bird. The knife was again kissed, and the blood mixed. I then drank some of this blood and made my vows to Satan.

Next I dipped my finger in the mixed blood and signed a real parchment, thereby selling my soul to Satan for ever and ever, to be his slave for all eternity. I was now a true Satanist, and everyone rejoiced that another child of Satan was born.

The people went crazy, and all kinds of evil scenes followed. Much wickedness was done that evening.

To my surprise I was sworn in as high priestess, a high honour indeed in Satanist circles. When I protested that I wasn't ready for such a place of honour, the chief Satanist said it was a request of the great Lucifer himself, and he must be obeyed.

In this position I could serve my master better. I was qualified to handle the sacred vessels and wait at the high altar. I was known as the great priestess Diana. I felt very important.

From a bit of conversation overheard at the strip club I had become a leader in Satanism, and Satan was indeed my master. I even heard his audible voice and saw him materialize in front of me.

On more than one occasion Lucifer materialized in a black form before all Satanists in the temple. No one disbelieved; it was indeed Satan. We heard his voice speaking to us as a whole congregation.

We knew it was he saying: "I am Lucifer, your master. I speak unto you from my lips. Obey my voice, my children. Do all the evil you wish. Never fear – I will protect you at all times. Revel in your freedom of lust this night. It is pleasing in my sight."

We all obeyed without question.

In olden times one or two chiefs had power from Lucifer to perform operations on themselves and others. No drugs were used in these operations. Furthermore, no scar remained where incisions were made.

The power to go into deep trances is still practised today. I too could go into a trance and see powerful activity in the demon sphere. ESP (extra sensory perception) was one of my powers. I could read people's minds easily and know what they would say or do.

Readers may ask if it was really possible that someone steeped in evil as I was in my position as high priestess could be wonderfully converted to the Lord Jesus Christ. But the Bible says Jesus died for the who-so-ever. He died for Satanists.

The time was to come when I would change masters and serve the greatest Master of all. But not yet.

## 12. Queen of Black Witches

AS the months went by my knowledge of evil grew. The practice of devil worship and my role as high priestess were the most important things in my life. Indeed, I thought of little else.

Even away from the temple the presence of Satan was very real. It was as if an unseen hand was pushing me further into the realms of darkness. For example, I needed very little sleep, and I was given a supernatural strength and endurance. I was truly a slave of satan and keeping my vows well.

Strangely, though, I kept my *Golden Bells Hymn Book*. By all Satanist rules I should have destroyed the book, but I couldn't do it. It was the only gift I'd ever received as a child.

Not that I read the hymns any more. I had given that up long ago. I had almost forgotten I possessed the book, carefully hidden from view. Many people came into my bedroom; the chief Satanist was of course always there.

One day I was having a drink with my lover and master, the chief Satanist. He seemed eager to impress me.

"I'm a black witch, Diana, and I practise black magic."

I nearly choked on my drink and then burst out laughing.

"It's not funny," snapped the chief Satanist.

"I'm sorry. It sounded funny," I said, still laughing.

My idea of a witch was a hook-nosed old hag riding on a broomstick across the face of the moon. As I soon discovered, nothing could be further from the truth.

Witchcraft of the black kind is not far removed from Satanism. The main difference between the two is that Satanists worship the devil in the Satanist temple, whereas witches attend a coven of thirteen witches, one of whom is the head. They require no temple.

Witchcraft can be practised anywhere but preferably in a quiet, remote setting, such as a deserted house, a lonely beach, or a wood. The witching hour of midnight is also preferred, and activities are conducted by moonlight. "Warlock" is the correct name for a person usually called a witch.

Black witches have great power and are not to be taken lightly. They are able to call up, or call down, powers of darkness to aid them.

Very often they exhume fresh graves and offer the bodies in sacrifice to Satan. They break into churches, burn Bibles and prayer books. Whenever holy ground is desecrated, an emblem of witchcraft is left behind: goat's blood is splashed on headstones of graves, on walls, etc.

They hold nothing sacred and will stop at nothing to pursue their goals. NOTHING!

Black witches have power to put curses on people, and the curses work. People have been known to die because of the curse or spell of a black witch. Nude rites are another evil aspect of witchcraft.

All this may seem rather unlikely to readers who have had no encounter with witchcraft, so it's worth explaining. Black witches and Satanists believe that in the ultimate battle between good and evil, evil will triumph. They believe that Lucifer will one day conquer Christ and will retrieve what they call his rightful place. Satan, they affirm, will rule the earth, sea, and heavens.

Hell, for a witch of the black kind, is not a place of torment but of unlimited pleasure, with every lust fulfilled. The more evil, the better is the motto of a black witch and Satanist.

Be warned: those who walk down the dark road of witchcraft lose their reason, often going completely insane. Good is called evil, which does not make sense. Minds are twisted and warped.

The chief Satanist's long discussion on witchcraft ended.

"You will make a fine witch, Diana. You have a great natural power."

I had known and felt that power often enough, but I believed it was not a natural, but rather a supernatural, power working through me. I was not born with it. The power was not my own but Satan's.

I was surprised at the chief Satanist's words. His dark eyes flashed as he spoke, almost hypnotizing me. His face shone with a strange, eerie light I'd never seen before. For one brief moment I wanted to escape, but the feeling subsided, and I agreed to accompany him to the witches' coven.

"It can be no worse than Satanism," I reasoned.

I had witnessed evil and ugly orgies in the Satanists' temple, but I was to see far worse in the witches' coven.

I always obeyed my master, the chief Satanist, and naturally I became a witch. At my initiation goat's blood was smeared all over my naked body. Things followed that were too evil to be brought to mind.

All meetings included awful scenes of perverted sexual acts, as sex plays an important part in witchcraft. Many black witches were Lesbians or homosexuals.

Sadism was practised frequently. Some even cut themselves with knives and felt no pain. Some swallowed poison, and no ill effects were experienced at all.

Imagine over one hundred black witches all taking part in such perversions at the same time. And this still goes on today.

My powers as a black witch were great, and I added to my knowledge of evil every day. My ability to levitate four or five feet was very real. It was not a hoax. Demons aided me.

Killing birds in flight after they had been let loose from a cage was another act I performed as a witch. I could make objects appear and disappear. I also mastered apport, which is often used when witches demonstrate their powers before others.

I took part in everything a black witch would do, leaving nothing out. I practised more wickedness in a single week than many would in an entire lifetime.

I was not surprised when the chief Satanist suggested that I advance in witchcraft.

“You might even be queen of black witches one day, Diana.”

“What, I?”

“Yes! I’ll submit your name. But keep practising your powers so that you will be ready for the test.”

The test of power to which the chief Satanist referred was to be held on Dartmoor in Devon, the centre of two large and active covens. Unaccompanied by my master (an unusual event), I exhibited my powers in a remarkable way one moonlight night. This action virtually confirmed me as queen of the witches – and points out the conflict between good and evil.

It was midnight, a bright, cloudless night, excellent for witching. The naked members of the coven were pursuing their rituals. I was among them. Suddenly we saw three men approaching over the brow of the hill. Although the intruders had not yet seen us witches, in a few minutes they would come upon the whole lot of us. There were no rocks or trees to hide behind.

“What shall we do?” asked the witches anxiously.

“There’s no place to hide!”

“Don’t worry,” I said. “I can make myself invisible.”

“What about us?”

“If you put yourself in my hands, I’ll make you invisible too.”

There was no time to lose. Hastily the others did as I told them. Standing perfectly still in a circle, we raised our hands so that they touched.

I called up powers of darkness from demons and Satan himself. Within seconds a green swirling mist enveloped us. We could scarcely see each other as the three men passed us. I could easily have reached out my hand and touched them, one of whom had walked under our raised hands into the centre of our circle. My magic had worked.

What I have related is perfectly true. The other witches and I were invisible to the three men, who were not even aware of the thick swirling mist. They had not seen a single thing.

“Let’s go home,” we heard one of the men say. “There are no witches here. We’re wasting our time.”

When the three intruders were gone, the mist slowly disappeared.

The reason for the three men’s appearance was explained when I read the local newspaper the day after. An article in the centre pages was headlined: NO WITCHES ON DARTMOOR. It related that a local preacher had taken two reporters onto Dartmoor the previous evening to investigate a rumour that witches would be present there.

The search had been fruitless, by all accounts. However, the local preacher was not convinced that witches had not been on the moor. He was right, of course. He had unawares been within inches of them.

We were all highly amused. The story was told in other covens, and my fame spread abroad. Some may think it strange that the Lord did not permit the local preacher to see the witches. Without questioning the Lord’s will, we can be absolutely sure that He had His own purpose in not permitting His servant to see. The Lord certainly did not permit His servant to be harmed – for I tried to put curses on the preacher, but they did not work. There was a barrier between my power and the preacher, who was a man of great faith and courage.

I was puzzled. My powers had never before failed. I had no idea that far greater power than that of Satan was protecting this man – the mighty power of the Lord Jesus Christ, who conquered death, hell, and Satan at the place called Calvary.

Although the event on Dartmoor at first glance showed plainly the power of witchcraft and Satan, in truth it showed the far greater power of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The scene was set for the great ceremony at which the next queen of black witches was to be chosen. Black witches from all parts of England assembled, as well as witches from Holland, Germany and France. They arrived before Hallowe'en, when Dartmoor was a hive of activity. The influx of visitors at Plymouth certainly included many witches.

They arrived in smart cars, not on broomsticks, and booked in at hotels looking for all the world like successful businessmen and women – which some were. This was the new face of witchcraft – prosperous, almost respectable – a veneer that concealed tremendous forces of evil.

Taking drugs before the ceremony helped to quell my feeling of nervousness, and I confidently faced the ordeal.

The ceremony commenced with chants to the ancient gods and demons. The moon goddess Diana was my favourite, for obvious reasons.

After the rituals the great test of power began. Seven witches, including me, were competing for the title. Success would not be easy, for all witches have great powers.

A bird was released from a cage. I killed it in flight. It was something I'd done before, but I was the only one who did it in this test. Various other supernatural feats were performed that eerie night on Dartmoor, but the last was the greatest: fire-walking.

The test was to walk through a great bonfire (not a ring of fire, please note, but a great blaze). The successful candidate would meet Lucifer in the centre of the blaze, and Lucifer would be *seen* by the assembly to take the hand of the witch and guide her through the flames so that she would emerge completely unscathed.

I walked confidently into the flames of seven feet or more, all the time calling on my great master, Diablos. Suddenly I saw him materialize before me – a great black figure. I took his hand and walked with him to the centre of the great blaze. There I paused, the great flames leaping around me.

Only when I emerged at the other side of the blaze did my master Diablos disappear. Not even the smell of burning was upon my loose witch's robe or my long flowing hair.

Everyone was prostrated on the ground.



“Hail, Diana, queen of black witches!” rose the loud cry of over a thousand witches.

A crown of pure gold was placed on my head, a cloak beautifully embroidered with gold was thrown around my shoulders, and an orb of gold placed in my left hand. I took my seat on the throne, which had been prepared before the ceremony. These and all other objects used were of great value and were carefully preserved for the reigning queen.

Wild and frenzied celebrations followed: dancing in the nude and other sensual pleasures, drink and drugs. Diana, queen of black witches, was of course the centre of attraction, regarded with pride by her master and lover, the chief Satanist. After all, I was his protege. He had trained me.

Had reporters or anyone else ventured on the moor that night, they could hardly have been unaware that something strange was going on. The flames of the huge fire must have been visible for miles, yet none of the witches were interrupted. Perhaps there were individuals who knew something evil was in progress and kept well away. I don't blame them.

One can laugh at legends of witchcraft when evidences of evil are not at hand or ever witnessed, yet had anyone been on the moor that night, he would not have laughed.

I know that witchcraft is real. Was I not right at the top as queen of black witches?

## 13. No Way Out

“QUEEN of Black Witches.” It was a title of high esteem, a standing of great importance. I was not a little envied by other witches who had great power. With the title went study, work, and travel.

And travel I did, in luxury, with the chief Satanist, who was also a black witch. Holland, Germany, France were some of the countries I visited. Foreign witches entertained the two honoured guests in grand style. We stayed only at the best hotels or sometimes in large, expensive houses situated in beautiful grounds, which were, of course, homes of witches.

The travels could aptly be described as a tour of sin.

There was no language barrier, for when I called upon Lucifer to help me, he did, and it was not long before I could understand the various tongues, not long before I could converse with ease. That old saying, “the devil looks after his own,” is true only when it suits his evil purposes.

Many discussions were held, the most important subject being how to make black witchcraft more appealing. Many people, especially the young, were taking a fresh interest in the occult. It was important to give witchcraft a new look, and these guidelines were laid down:

Never frighten anyone. Offer new realms of mystery and excitement. Make witchcraft less sinister. Make it look like natural, innocent adventure. (Everyone is attracted by adventure and mystery.) Cover up evil with appealing wrappings.

New recruits were needed if evil was to conquer. Time was short. Now was the time to trap people. Once people were involved in witchcraft, it would be too late to get out. Fear would hold many back from retreating. There would be no way out.

We witches were very devout in our cause, and discussions went on for hours on end. We were not sparing with our time. Sharing experiences, demonstrating occult powers, and visiting covens were some of my activities on my full programme abroad.

When I returned to England, my time was spent visiting covens. Many new ones were springing up, and it was important to encourage new members. White witches were swelling their ranks; therefore we also had to attract new members. We didn't mention blood sacrifice – that would have caused fright.

White witches joined the ranks of the black witches, and we learned from them. I will mention here that although white witches claim never to harm anyone, I can say that I've known white witches who did so. Practices called voodoo by black witches were followed by white witches, who use "fith fath," a doll made of clay in the image of the person they wish to harm. They use a pin on this image to seal the lips of the person represented. They tie a cord to the legs of the image to inflict pain in the person's legs. When someone is rendered speechless or when he is made to suffer pains in his legs and is' unable to walk, he is certainly being harmed.

I was queen of black witches for a full year. Then I willingly stepped down to allow someone younger to take the title, although I could have kept it had I wished. As soon as I gave up the title the chief Satanist found himself a new mistress. At first I was hurt and angry, but, after all he was the chief Satanist and no one questioned him. Best to accept it and go quietly.

I left London and drifted from town to village for a few years, visiting London now and then to obtain my drugs or to worship at the temple of Satan. Life was a little less hectic but still as dark as the grave. Prostitution was always something to fall back on if cash got short. As queen of witches I had lived a life of luxury and had been more of a call girl.

Perhaps my greatest power was my ability to deceive the many people I met. No one besides the Satanists knew of my darker activities late at night in a witches' coven, not even the man I lived with.

I managed to get away with the biggest lies. No one doubted them in the least. In fact, I often felt that if I were to tell the truth, no one would believe it. Lies were more readily accepted.

Those were unsettling years for me. I had one mounting fear – the fear of growing old and dying. As the fear grew, so questions arose in my mind. Was hell the wonderful place I had been led to believe? Suppose it was just the reverse. What then?

When the doubts persisted, I decided to try to break away from witchcraft and Satanism. Of course I would have to be careful, I reasoned – break away slowly so no one would notice, because no one leaves black witchcraft. It was worth a try at least.

While I was in the covens in the midst of rituals, I half believed that what I was doing was right for me. Then fear and uncertainty gripped me. In the

awful confusion I felt I was trapped in a long dark tunnel. No glimmer of light could I see.

At this time of doubt and confusion I decided to visit a few Christian churches, just to see if they had the answer. Not that these visits were frequent. Far from it. But the fact remains, I at least went – something a black witch would never do. Always the fear of being found out haunted me. I constantly looked over my shoulder to make sure I wasn't being followed.

"What's the use?" I would think. "I've sold my soul to Satan with my own blood."

Why did I have doubts about my craft? Was it because I was not in the constant company of witches, seeing them only once or twice a week? Or was it that the Lord Jesus caused serious doubts about my craft to arise? I believe the latter.

Surely the loving Saviour was looking down on this captive child of darkness in great, tender compassion. One small link of the chain that bound me so tightly was beginning to weaken.

Eventually, after many roamings, I moved to Bristol. Because of the docks in Bristol it wasn't difficult to obtain my drugs, after a little help from London to make the right contacts. Again, in Bristol, Daring Diana was back in business as a prostitute, ready as ever with a laugh and a song.

I was quite popular with the street girls of Bristol, especially in the twilight area of St. Paul's, where I lived. Little did anyone realize my true feelings of loneliness and uncertainty.

Black witchcraft is widely practised in the west country, and before long I found the witches' covens. Some of the witches remembered me and had been on Dartmoor when I was crowned queen. I was put in charge of two covens in Bristol.

Still the doubts persisted. But life went on in the same sordid way. I had given up any thoughts of getting out. I knew it was useless trying. *There was no way out.*

Bristol is a city of churches, as I soon discovered. There seemed to be one on every corner. I visited a few, but my visits were extremely short. Indeed, I never stayed the whole length of the service. I cannot remember what was said or done there.

In my wavering, tossed-about way I forgot about my search for the truth. Instead I turned strongly against the churches as true Satanists should,

regarding them all as a lot of hypocrites. At this point even the sight of a Christian church annoyed me immensely.

I stared at the name on the display board outside one of Bristol's churches. Wasn't he the preacher from Plymouth who tried to expose the witches on Dartmoor? I'd tried to cast spells on him, but they had never worked. Now he was coming to Bristol.

I hurried on. It was uncanny. Try as I might, I couldn't get his name out of my mind. God moves in a mysterious way.

One summer evening I was out as usual on the familiar streets. Two of my friends, also prostitutes, were with me. I suddenly stopped at the sight of another poster, outside yet another church. The poster proclaimed in large bold letters:

*Blessed are the pure in heart,  
For they shall see God.*

The quotation affected me strangely. It was that word pure. It seemed to reach out. Anger and resentment swept over me.

"I'm not pure, so I'll never see God – if there is a God."

If there is a God – I was not sure.

Moving swiftly to the board, I tore the poster down, rather surprised when the entire poster came away intact. I dropped it quickly.

"Bloomin' load of hypocrites!" I said hotly.

"Good old Diana. She's at it again," laughed the two girls.

They were highly amused, but I was not laughing. I was furious. The truth was my conscience was pricked; God was pursuing me.

This incident was in the way of preparation for what was to follow, only I didn't know it.

Some months later I was out walking again, this time in the centre of Bristol. It was a Monday morning, an unusual time indeed for me to be out. Once again I was in the company of those of my own kind, wandering aimlessly around the streets.

I noticed many posters displayed in prominent places, unusual posters.

"Come and hear Eric Hutchings at the Colston Hall," read one. "Thousands hear. Hear you too," proclaimed another.

Yet the posters didn't say who Eric Hutchings was or why he was coming to Bristol. There was only a picture of his face.

At first glance I surmised he was an all-in wrestler. I was puzzled and determined to find out just who he was. I marched into the information bureau, followed by my giggling friends.

“Who is Eric Hutchings?” I asked the woman behind the counter.

“I haven’t the faintest idea,” she replied.

“Someone must know,” I insisted, explaining about the many posters I’d seen.

“I do believe he is an evangelist or a preacher of some sort,” spoke up another woman.

I nearly fainted. Oh, no! Not again. I couldn’t get away from them.

“As if we haven’t got enough preachers in Bristol without him poking his nose in.”

I was angry and raised my voice in protest. By this time I had a small audience who were amused, if a little puzzled, by my outburst.

“Come on, girls. Let’s get out of here.”

They duly followed me, in fits of laughter.

As my giggling friends watched, I proceeded to pull down every Eric Hutchings poster I could find. I was conducting my own crusade as champion poster-puller.

“Has everyone gone crazy in this city of churches?” I was saying. “Has everyone got religious mania?”

Much to my astonishment just a few days later even more posters had been put up. It seemed that six replaced each one I had removed. My anger flared again, but I changed my tactics.

Instead of pulling down the posters I drew a big bushy beard on the face of Eric Hutchings, or a huge handlebar moustache, much to the delight of my friends.

Billy Graham was in the news at the same time. In contempt I called the two preachers a pair of do-gooding hypocrites. By this time my friends were more than puzzled by my behaviour.

“What are you getting all steamed up about, Diana? They haven’t done you any harm.”

“They haven’t done me any bloomin’ good either,” I snapped.

Why indeed? My heart was filled with hate for anything Christian.

Lucifer, my master, was not at all pleased that the grand old Gospel story was to be preached in Bristol. A crusade was planned, to be held, not in a church, but in a large central hall.

I have related that I was trapped in my evil life and there was no way out. I was to hear of *the only way out*: through the love and salvation of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Unaware of what lay ahead, I continued in my shameful way of life, the only way I knew.

## 14. First Step to Freedom

IT was a lovely summer evening in June 1964. Three weeks had passed since I'd ripped down the posters announcing the arrival of Eric Hutchings. I had forgotten all about him. It was a Saturday, and I had other things on my mind in my business as a prostitute.

Daring Diana, dressed in keeping with her profession, was waiting for a client. Growing more restless as the minutes ticked away, I realized he wasn't going to turn up. I was high on drugs, and drink.

Just about to move on, I was suddenly aware of crowds of people, all heading in one direction. Curious as ever, I wondered why many people were in the centre of Bristol early in the evening. Then I saw the Bibles that some were carrying.

"It's all the religious hypocrites going to Eric Hutchings' meeting," I thought.

I fell in step behind a small group. At Colston Hall I paused, but not for long.

"I'll show him what I think of him and his meeting."

I was not in a very good mood. Wishing I had a few of my friends with me to back me up, I pushed my way through the vast crowds in the entrance hall. I had one purpose in mind; to punch Eric Hutchings on the nose.

I cannot recall how an observant usher managed to calm me down as I set out to do what I'd come for, but he did. He showed me to an empty seat at the end of a packed row. My entrance caused no small stir, since the entire row had to stand up to let me pass.

I was dressed in a low-cut black satin dress, my face was heavily made up, and I flaunted an assortment of jangling jewelry. I could feel the curious stares in the audience.

I directed my gaze to the platform. Here sat a row of ministers and behind them a huge mixed choir, dressed in white. I was beginning to feel uncomfortable. People seated in front of me turned to stare at the decorative Doreen.

"Let 'em all look!" I thought. "Do 'em good." They received a long, hard glare in return.

The meeting began with a rousing hymn, but I was not singing. I was thinking how I might make an exit without attracting too much interest – it



had been bad enough when I walked in.

When at last the hymn ended, everyone sat down everyone except me, for I saw my chance to beat a hasty retreat. At this precise moment a hush fell on the large congregation as a woman with a sweet voice broke into song, filling the air with lovely music. It caused me to pause and listen.

*I would love to tell you what I think of Jesus,  
Since I found in Him a Friend so strong and true.  
I would tell you how He changed my life completely.  
He's done something that no other friend could do.*

*All my life was full of sin, when Jesus found me.  
All my life was full of misery and woe.  
Jesus placed His strong and loving arms around me,  
And He led me in the way I ought to go.*

*No one ever cared for me like Jesus.  
There's no other friend so kind as He.  
No one else could take the sin and darkness from me.  
Oh! how much He cares for me.*

Something wonderful yet inexplicable was happening deep down inside me – something I'd never experienced before. My whole life unfolded before me as if projected on a screen. My mind was very clear, and I was instantly sobered up.

I saw myself as a child in the Sunday school class and heard the teacher say, "Why not let Jesus come into your heart?"

I saw the Salvation Army lassie singing on the Paddington streets. I also saw the beds of shame and myself in the witches' covens.

As accompaniment to the scenes before my mind's eye I heard the words of that lovely song. The realization dawned on my black and sinful heart that no one really loved me – not the men on the streets or the men in the public houses, not the Satanists or witches. Yet the singer said that Jesus cared and that Jesus could take the sin and awful *darkness* away.

Oh, could it be true? Could it really be true that this Jesus really lived and really cared? Could He care for me, a common prostitute, drug addict, and

witch? Oh, if it were true, I would surely love Him in return. How could I have missed such blessings all these long years?

After years of deepest shame someone was reaching out to me – Jesus, the tender Saviour who died in my place. For the first time in my life I felt dirty and really ashamed of the life I'd lived.

I had completely forgotten I was still standing up in the large hall. I was sorry when the solo ended. I wished there had been fifty verses. Betty-Lou Mills, the singer's, face shone with an inner radiance, a beauty not obtainable in any chemist's shop.

Whether the unusual sight of a worldly woman standing and listening so intently to the soloist made any impact on that gathering is not known to me. I was unaware of anything or anyone except the singer and her wonderful message of hope.

I sat down subdued and shaken. Eric Hutchings began his sermon thus: "If you do not know the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour, you are lost. You are dead in trespasses and sins. The Bible says you are BOUND."

He laid such emphasis on the word bound I nearly fell off my seat in fright. He was right though, and I knew it. I jumped to my feet and shouted, "He's right. I AM bound!"

A shocked silence fell on the vast congregation, not to mention the evangelist himself, who was unable to speak for a few moments.

When he continued, he spoke with added fervour.

"If you go to church Sunday by Sunday and do not know the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour, you too are lost."

My ears pricked up at this statement, and I wanted to resound a hearty "Hear, hear!" but I was aware that people were watching me and I refrained.

"He's having a go at the church members," I thought, "so he's not such a bad sort."

Eric Hutchings went on to say that Jesus died for the who-so-ever, and if they turn to Him, He will set them free from the bondage of Satan. My heart was beating very quickly indeed. Could He set me free?

I remember no more of that powerful sermon. At the close the evangelist made an appeal: "Come to Jesus tonight. Come out to the front."

People began coming forward as the choir sang:

*Just as I am, without one plea  
But that Thy blood was shed for me,*

*And that Thou bidst me come to Thee.  
Oh, Lamb of God, I come, I come!*

Chains seemed to bind me to my seat as I heard the audible voice of Diablos: “You are MINE. You cannot go. It’s too late for you. You are MINE.”

I was shaking from head to foot. A great battle was going on, a battle with the powers of darkness and Satan. My evil master was fighting to hold on to me.

The choir sang another verse.

*Just as I am, though tossed about  
With many a conflict, many a doubt,  
Fighting and fears within, without.  
Oh, Lamb of God, I come, I come!*

By some tremendous miracle I was on my feet, making my way to the front, all the while fighting the powers of darkness within and realizing too that someone greater than Satan had come to my aid.

Satan was losing the battle. Satan was losing his slave. Jesus, who cared for me, even me in all my sin and shame, was tenderly wooing and winning my black and sinful heart.

I was now standing at the front. Tears were falling down I my painted face.

“I’m coming, Jesus,” I said softly. “Please take the I darkness away.”

I had no understanding of how to pray. But do we need to know how? The Saviour heard the cry of my heart and accepted me just as I was. What rejoicing there must have been in heaven that night!

In the counselling room later all was different. I was not easy to counsel. My doubts and fears came flooding back in that changed atmosphere.

I even heard the voice of Satan say, “You cannot change. You are MINE.”

A great struggle was going on within. What about my way of life? How could I live without drugs? How could I give it all up?

Several individuals spoke to me and showed me verses in the Bible, but I couldn’t take it in. They presented the ABC’s of the Gospel, but something was missing that I couldn’t name. Those Bible verses applied to anyone

who was seeking Christ, and of course they applied to me, but more was needed.

I was afraid to reveal the whole truth about myself, afraid they would turn me out if they knew I was a witch and a prostitute and a strip-tease artiste.

All I said was, "I'm a drug addict."

How was I to know they would not dream of turning me out?

They were at a loss in their counselling, only saying, "If you let Christ take over your life, everything else will just fall away."

I didn't think it would be as easy as that. I agreed to pray, though, trying hard to believe what they said was true.

"Perhaps they are right. When I wake up in the morning, maybe everything will be different," I thought.

But something was missing somewhere.

A woman adviser then spoke to me for a little while. She was Mrs. Mary Hutchings, although I didn't know it at the time.

"I will pray for you, my dear," she said.

She was gentle and kind. I liked her.

Eventually I left, clutching my copy of St. John's Gospel and a little book called *First Steps with Christ*. It was very late, well after midnight. Everyone else had left long ago.

A group of prostitutes were standing on the corner near Colston Hall.

"Hello, Diana," they chorused. "Where have you been? We've been looking for you."

"I have just got saved at Colston Hall," I answered simply.

They thought I was having them on. They roared with laughter.

"I'm not joking. I have given my heart to Jesus at Colston Hall."

They stared in unbelief.

"Come off it, Diana. It's us – your friends."

"I'm perfectly well aware of that. But it's true. I'm going home now to read my Bible."

I showed them my St. John's Gospel.

"Goodnight, girls," I said and went home.

Although I did not realize it, I had done a tremendous thing. I had just confessed with my mouth the Lord Jesus. No one had told me to witness in this way. Although I didn't know it then, I was on my way to becoming an evangelist. I knew nothing as well of the bitter struggle that would follow.

I was set on the right pathway. Jesus would do the rest, watching over me, protecting me, until at last I would obtain a great deliverance. My feet were on the narrow way.

I had taken the first step to freedom.

## 15. Search for Deliverance

WHEN I awoke the following morning, the events of the previous evening came slowly back to mind I hadn't slept well. Perhaps I've just dreamed it all, I thought. But it wasn't a dream, for there on my bedside table was the Gospel of St. John and the booklet *First Steps with Christ*.

I had kept my promise to the counsellor and to the girls on the street corner to read the booklets, for before going to sleep I'd sat up in bed and read the Gospel of St. John right through from beginning to end – not that I understood or remembered a thing, but I'd kept my word.

“Will life be different now? Will things change for me?” I wondered.

As the days passed, doubts filled my mind. How could I ever hope to live a Christian life? How could I give up drugs, drink, cigarettes, and my way of life on the streets? It would be far too difficult. And what about witchcraft? How could I get out of that?

A voice, the audible voice of Lucifer, said: “You can't get out of it. You are mine! It's too late for you.”

“He's right,” I thought. “Best to forget about it all straight away.”

I pushed the Gospel of St. John into a drawer and went out to have a drink in a nearby pub.

As I sat drinking, I heard again the sweet voice of the singer.

*No one else can take the sin and darkness from me.*

*Oh, how much He cares for me!*

“This is stupid,” I thought; “Why does that song come back and haunt me – here, of all places?”

“Forget about it,” said Lucifer again in an audible voice. “Have another drink. It will soon go away.”

But it didn't go away, even after several more drinks. How could I forget? Wherever I went I could hear:

*Jesus cares for me, Jesus loves me.*

While I was walking the streets in search of men, or drinking in pubs, or even while giving myself a fix of heroin, snatches of that lovely solo kept

ringing in my ears, telling me over and over that Jesus cares.

“Take no notice,” persisted Lucifer. “It’s not for you.”

“Am I going completely mad?” I thought.

Two voices saying two entirely opposite things. What was happening to me?

I was the battleground of a great struggle between good and evil, between the very powers of darkness and Jesus Christ, the mighty Son of God.

I was most surprised to receive a letter from the woman counsellor. No one ever wrote to me. It was a sweet letter, saying, “I am praying for you. Can you come again to the crusade?”

Although I was very touched to receive such a kind letter, I wasn’t sure about returning to the crusade meetings.

“Don’t go!” said Lucifer again. “You are mine!”

His voice was even more frightening this time. My mind was in a complete turmoil. But I did return. Some sweet power seemed to draw me back two nights later.

I hoped the soloist would sing again the song that kept ringing in my ears. Instead she sang something quite different. Still, her face was a picture of sheer joy, and I knew that I wanted what she had. Oh, to serve the Lord Jesus Christ fully, to be free from drugs, prostitution, and witchcraft!

That very night Lucifer stood by my bed. There was no mistaking him. I’d seen him often enough in the past and heard his audible voice many times. It was not imagination but very real indeed.

“You are MINE,” he said. “You must obey me. Keep away from Christians, or you will die.”

His form and face were black and twisted, his voice ugly with hate and threats. I felt great hairy hands reach out and grab my throat. I tried to shout out, I tried to pray. It was no use. The power of evil was too strong for me. It was all very awful, all very real.

“What’s the use?” I thought. “I’m in his power and have been for years. I can never be a pure Christian.”

No matter how much I wanted to be released, I was in Lucifer’s dreadful grip. In another pendulum swing I decided to give up any idea of loving and serving the Lord Jesus.

Then again, and yet again, the words of the solo rang in my ears,

*Only Jesus can take the sin and darkness from me.*

*Oh, how much He cares for me!*

That did it.

“I’ll fight until I’m free. I’ll search until I find the freedom I need and want.”

How wonderfully true it is that once Jesus Christ has begun a work in someone’s heart, He never leaves him alone. Jesus was not going to let me go. I was His child now. Although the battle had only just begun Jesus was making me aware of His presence and nurturing my desire to be set free from all bondage.

The woman counsellor came to visit me.

“If you really want to love and follow Jesus,” she said, “you must have fellowship with His children. Join an evangelical church.”

“All right,” I agreed. “Where is the Evangelical Church? Which one do I go to?”

“We’re not allowed to advise which evangelical church you should attend. Go to any evangelical church. There are many around.”

I at no time told her that I was a witch, prostitute, and strip-tease artiste. I was held back by fear of what would happen to me if everyone knew the kind of life I’d lived. That I was in real spiritual needs was all she and a few others knew.

As for finding a church to attend regularly, whatever would anyone like me know about churches and denominations?

Out on the streets as usual, I passed many churches, but I saw no sign of an Evangelical Church, although I looked closely at the names as I passed. I saw the Methodist Church, and the Baptist Church, and the Church of England, and many more, but not a sign of the Evangelical Church anywhere.

The counsellor had said there were plenty around, yet I couldn’t find one – simply because I was looking for a label. What does the term evangelical mean to a complete outsider as I was? NOTHING!

But I wanted to know more about Jesus. I was earnest in my seeking, despite the fact I had not changed my way of life. But I could not change – and I knew it – unless I somewhere found something or someone who could help me, even if it meant going to church to find deliverance. Now, ask any prostitute to attend church, and she will laugh in your face.



“What, me?” she would say. “What would the likes of me be doing in church? They wouldn’t want me in a place like that!”

You can imagine how I felt. How would it ever come about that I would go to church? I wondered. It seemed impossible, but I was determined to find what I was looking for.

I shall never forget my first experience of attending church. Giving up my efforts to find the Evangelical Church, in desperation I walked into the first church I saw one Sunday evening.

It was large and packed with people. I looked a little nervously at the congregation, who appeared so respectable and good. My reaction was an urge to run out again.

There were no empty seats at the back. The only empty pews were right down at the front of the church, and there were two whole rows of empty pews.

No one helped me. I had to make my way to the front to get a seat. It was embarrassing, and once again I felt that every eye was on me. I was dressed much the same as when I first went to the Colston Hall.

“Why does everyone stare so?” I thought.

The service began with a dreary hymn, not at all like the rousing hymn sung on the first night of the crusade. The minister then prayed a very long, complicated prayer. Another hymn followed, even more dreary and difficult to sing than the first.

Next came the Bible reading. I had my St. John’s Gospel with me. The minister read from another part of the Bible, and I couldn’t understand why I couldn’t find his reading in my little Bible.

Eventually the minister began his sermon, but I couldn’t understand one word of what he was trying to say. He used long theological phrases that didn’t make sense to me. Nothing was simple or plain. I wanted to hear something about Jesus that I could understand, like: Jesus can set you free, Jesus loves you. But I didn’t hear a thing I could understand.

I was becoming restless and very bored, and gasping for a cigarette. I couldn’t stand it a minute longer and jumped up and walked out. Everything became very quiet as I walked past the good, respectable-looking people and out of the door.

I lit my cigarette outside, but all the time I was thinking, “Perhaps I didn’t give it a fair chance. Perhaps it’s me. Better try again.”

So in I walked, much to the astonishment of the congregation, who obviously thought I'd gone for good. I sat down again in the front and stayed until the end, jolly glad when we came to the closing prayer. I prayed too, hoping Jesus would understand me.

The people were standing around in small groups. The minister was shaking hands and saying polite farewells at the door. I tried to get past him without his seeing me, but I failed. He was very sedate and polite.

"Good evening," he said with a smile.

Somehow I liked him.

"We haven't seen you before, have we?" he asked. "No, 'cos I ain't been here before have I?"

There was a stillness in the air. He was very startled by my reply. After a few seconds he continued.

"What made you come tonight?"

"Well, I went to the Eric Hutchings crusade at Colston Hall and gave my heart to Jesus."

He beamed.

"That's wonderful!"

And I knew he loved Jesus.

"Can I help you at all on the Christian pathway?"

I thought quickly: "Is this my chance? No harm in trying."

"Well," I said to the minister, "I don't know if you can. You see, I'm a prostitute and drug addict."

He looked very strange and went a bit white. In fact I thought he was going to fall over backwards. The people standing nearby became very quiet and gave me curious looks.

After recovering himself, the minister said. "Do come again. Good night."

"Come again?" I thought. "What for? What's the matter with these people? Can't anyone help me? Where is this Jesus they talk about so much?"

Looking back, I can smile, and feel a little sad also. Those people went to church Sunday after Sunday with nothing unusual happening to disturb their well-run meetings. It was rather a shock to have someone like me walking in – a rank outsider, someone so different from them.

One of the old-time preachers once said, "Be prepared for anything." They were certainly not prepared for someone like me. As a result, I was in

no different state when I left the church than when I walked in – more confused, if anything.

“Where, then, do I go next? What do I do now? Where is reality found in this city of churches?”

Some weeks went by. I was still seeking. The battle was getting fiercer. Lucifer was stepping up his efforts to keep me chained and bound. As the battle grew fiercer, so other things happened.

I wandered into many different churches and sometimes heard the blood of Jesus mentioned. At that, a dark force within took control of me, and strange things occurred. I acted in inexplicable, Satanic ways. I snatched Bibles and tore them. I threw hymn books around the church. I knocked communion trays out of the hands of those who were taking around the bread and wine.

I would fall to the floor screaming, hissing, and slithering like a snake. Then, quite suddenly I would come to myself and remember nothing. Very often I would run out of church sobbing and crying.

People didn’t understand what was wrong with me or why I caused such disturbances. Some thought I was mentally ill. But I knew that it was not I myself that willed these actions. A dark evil within me took control.

Outside the churches I could feel an unseen hand pushing me into doing the very things I wanted to give up. Before I gave my heart to Jesus I took part in witchcraft, drugs, and prostitution without hesitation, but now that I was seeking to live a Christian life, the things I wanted to part with I sought out as if *against my will*. I was made to do them, controlled by some evil power deep within.

When in my wanderings in and out of the churches I heard the real Gospel preached, the evil forces within became activated. I went out undelivered.

I visited many churches. Many evil manifestations continued. I saw the bewildered and concerned looks on the faces of people when I came around, and I too was confused, more confused than the ministers themselves. I wondered why they didn’t do something for me.

As the struggle didn’t abate, I decided it was best to stay out of the churches. Perhaps I was mad, and there was no help for me in churches, or indeed anywhere. I was at the point of giving up my search for freedom from evil.

“Seek, and ye shall find,” the Bible says. “Knock, and it SHALL be opened unto you.”

“Jesus cares! Jesus cares!” In my dejection the words rang in my ears more clearly than ever. “I must get free. I want to live for Jesus if He loves me so much.”

The Lord Jesus was speaking to me. Through the darkness. Through the confusion. The Holy Spirit was breaking through, encouraging me to seek, seek, seek, until I found. One Sunday morning I decided to try again. I resolved to go to God’s house and pray. The moment I entered the evil powers took control. When I came to myself, to my horror I saw smashed communion glasses and spilt wine, bewildered looks on men’s faces.

I ran out sobbing and weeping, running down the road as if every devil in hell were at my heels. I was really desperate now. I was really in despair.

“Best to end it all, best to die, DIE, DIE, DIE,” said Lucifer.

His voice was mocking me as I ran like a tormented, hunted animal down the road. I reached a small bridge. I jumped up onto the parapet and was just about to throw myself into the water below when a man suddenly pulled me down.

“What do you think you’re doing, you silly woman?”

I tore myself away from him and ran again, not knowing what to do or where to run. Blindly I ran into a telephone box, shaking and sobbing for some time.

As I grew quieter, I saw on the wall of the telephone box the name and telephone number of a minister, Rev. Stanley Jebb. I read it again. Before I even thought, I was on the phone talking to him. I don’t know what I said, but I was in a terrible state.

“Please come to the church,” said the minister.

He gave me the name and address. His voice was warm and kind. So it was a short while later that I was at the Baptist church in Queen’s Road, Bristol. Two men were waiting for me, one the minister, the other a Mr. Dennis Clark, an evangelist.

They were kind and very understanding as I sobbed out part of my sad story. They listened intently. They really understood me. I could hardly believe it.

They calmed me down a little and prayed for me. At that the evil forces within became active again and fought the ministers as they tried to pray

and lay hands on me. The men didn't seem a bit worried at the reaction, but they stopped praying.

They spoke to me kindly and gently: "We know a man who can help you if you let him. He is minister of a Baptist church at Burnham-on-Sea. His name is Arthur Neil. We know he can help you. We'll contact him for you and let you know when he can see you."

It was arranged for me to see Rev. Arthur Neil. At last, at last, I was on the right road to freedom.

This is a true account of my long search for deliverance.

## 16. The Finger of God

REV. Arthur Neil arrived the following afternoon with the Baptist minister, Rev. Stanley Jebb. I watched them enter the front gate and proceed to the door.

Suddenly a voice said to me, “Don’t open the door. Have nothing to do with them.”

Frightened though I was, I was aware that the dark powers within me were more afraid than I. Somehow I knew that Mr. Neil was the man who could help me, so, although I was afraid, I opened the door to let the men in.

Mr. Neil was a complete stranger to me, yet I knew instinctively he was a pure and holy man of God. I felt as black as the night and as vile as the devil himself in his presence.

Straight away he tried to put me at ease. He was very kind and gentle, and love seemed to shine from his eyes. I had to drop my eyes before his gaze. Something dark within me rebelled against him, but it was not I myself that did so.

“Do these voices you hear have names?”

“No.”

“Are there any unclean spirits?”

I became aware, suddenly, of the evil spirits within me. They actually possessed my body. The evil spirit spoke again, but only to me.

“Tell him nothing, nothing.”

Now, I was no stranger to demons. Had I not often called on them to assist me in rites as witch and Satanist? For the first time I knew these demons were within me, not outside. It was a startling revelation.

But I said nothing, nothing about witchcraft or Satanism, or anything at all.

There was no need, for Mr. Neil knew I was demon-possessed, if he knew nothing else about me. He pointed his finger at me – yet not at me myself but at the demons within. He spoke in a strange tongue that the demons understood, commanding them to leave me in the name of Jesus.

I sat terrified in the chair.

But the demons within were even more afraid. Mr. Neil laid his hands on my head as Dennis Clark had done the previous afternoon. I made no

attempt to attack Mr. Neil. I was fully aware of what was happening. I knew without the shadow of a doubt that the great kingdom of darkness within me was well and truly shaken.

Later Mr. Neil explained that he had used the authoritative tongue the Lord had given him in dealing with demons.

I felt very much easier in myself. Somehow I knew all would be well.

The two ministers left after an hour or so, but Mr. Neil knew that a long and deep ministry with me had only just begun. He was so right.

If I felt easier after my first encounter with this man of God, it was not to last very long. I had the most dreadful night.

In the early hours of the morning I awoke filled with the most awful fear, I was surrounded by evil powers. I heard the awful voices, but this time they gave their names. I was torn inside as if someone had taken a knife. and was tearing me to pieces.

Tossing back and forth as the demons within tormented and tore me, I heard this:

“Have nothing to do with Neil. I am Doubt and Unbelief.”

“I am not coming out.”

Then many more voices cried out all at once: “Not me – not me – not me!”

It sounded like a mighty chorus growing louder and louder. I was perspiring, the bed clothes were soaking wet, my body was torn by the demons.

I heard again another voice say: “I am Lust. I am an unclean spirit. I am not leaving. I have been here for years.”

“I am Lies,” said another. “I’m not leaving either.”

“And I am Witchcraft,” said another very powerful demon.

“I am Pride,” said another. “I am not leaving.”

“No, nor I.”

“Nor I.”

“Nor I.”

The demons spoke one after another. I thought I was going mad. I was not mad, yet I knew that if these demons were not cast out, I would go completely mad.

I wondered where Jesus was, where the light was. My eyes couldn’t see the light at all. The darkness of hell seemed to descend upon me.

When I finally got up, I heard a voice say: "Phone the pastor of the Baptist church. Tell him not to come to the house."

I was expecting Rev. Jebb to call that morning to see how I was feeling. I telephoned, as the voice had bidden, but his wife answered and said he was already on his way.

I waited, smoking cigarette after cigarette. The disturbing unrest within would not let me sit down. At eleven a.m. I heard a knock at the front door, and I knew it was the pastor. He was as kind as ever.

I told him of the names I'd heard.

"Do not despair," he said. "I will contact Mr. Neil again, straight away."

I felt afraid. It was not just I who was afraid – once again I knew that the demons within me were afraid.

Rev. Jebb explained that because Mr. Neil did not live in Bristol but at Bumham-on-Sea, I couldn't see him immediately.

"I will let you know when Mr. Neil can see you again. Meanwhile do not worry. I shall pray for you."

It was some days before Mr. Neil was able to see me again. He was very busy, with a full ministry as a Baptist pastor. Those few days of waiting were like long years. I visited the old haunts – pubs, cinemas, the witches' covens – but I felt I was pushed to these places by the dark demons within. They actually controlled me.

At the same time I wandered into various places of worship. I visited the Spiritist church, then ran out halfway through.

I drank and smoked more than ever. Sometimes I remembered nothing of what I'd done or where I'd gone in my wanderings. I felt compelled to wander down dark streets – the darker the better – wearing only black clothes.

In the short moments of normality, when I was myself, I yearned with all my heart to be pure, to be free, to love and serve Jesus Christ and Him alone.

I was like a split person, like two people: one, the witch, prostitute, addict; the other, someone who wanted to be changed completely, to be happy and joyful.

I knew I was not ill, not mad. I was possessed by evil spirits and was almost constantly obeying their commands.

One Friday morning I had word that Mr. Neil would see me that very evening. I was told that my counsellor from the crusade and her husband



would take me by car to the Baptist church in Queen's Road, Rev. Jebb's church.

At that news everything within me that was evil trembled. I literally shook from head to foot.

"Keep away from Neil," the demons demanded. "He is holy, too holy for us. Keep away. Don't go to the church."

A thousand voices, like hammers inside me, thundered out the same message.

The day of restlessness turned to evening. As soon as I saw Mr. Neil I again had the feeling, only more so, that he was a pure and holy man of God.

I was unnerved. I wanted to run away but couldn't. Mr. Neil smiled at me, and I was put at ease instantly, but it didn't last very long. I found I couldn't meet his eyes. They seemed to pierce right through to my very soul. I could sense his calmness and his power. It was most disturbing.

"This man could tell me more than I can tell him," I thought.

He was fully aware of what was wrong. He asked me to tell him the names I'd heard. I did my best to tell him all. As I spoke, my thoughts were being taken away. I was being held back by the demons. Mr. Neil understood perfectly.

Now he spoke in another tongue, pointing his finger in a very commanding way. I can remember no more, as the demons within took complete control.

It was not until later, when I was completely free from all demons, that Mr. Neil did tell me exactly what happened that night. And this is what he told me.

Six demons revealed themselves under close interrogation by Mr. Neil. They each expressed themselves through my lips, according to their individual nature.

The commander-in-chief was Doubt and Unbelief (one demon). It was most obstinate and violent. Apparently I had to be held by two Christian men while Mr. Neil cast out the demon.

He pointed his finger (see Luke 11:20) and quoted, "If I by the finger of God cast out demons, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon Doreen."

He commanded in the name of Jesus, both in English and in the tongue the Lord had given him for the purpose of exorcism, that the demon should leave and depart to Gehenna (hell).

The tremendous struggle that followed could best be described by Ephesians 6:12. Wrestling is the perfect description. The demon didn't want to leave my body and certainly didn't want to go to Gehenna before the time, but in the end it left with a loud scream. As it came out, it tore me.

The exorcism lasted three or four hours. In this time the demon Deceit and the unclean spirits of Lust, Lies, Pride, and Witchcraft were despatched to Gehenna.

The demon of Witchcraft, said Mr. Neil, was very noisy. Its nature was weird and gave expression by certain enchanted wailings.

"Do you know the witch of Endor?" it almost sang in weird, bewitching tones.

"It tried to bewitch me," Mr. Neil told me, "but I resisted it in the authority of the name of Jesus Christ, consigning it to Gehenna."

"Not there, not there!" wailed the Witchcraft spirit. "I must have her body. I will not leave her body. I need a body. Not there, not there! Not Gehenna!"

"You will not possess her body or any other body," said Mr. Neil. "I command you to leave her body and go now to Gehenna, in the name of Jesus Christ."

But the Witchcraft demon was very obstinate. The exchanges went on for some time before Mr. Neil with a final word of command opened the nearby door and commanded the spirit to leave and go straight to Gehenna.

It did – with terrific screams and wailings, saying: "All right, all right. I'm going."

I fell to the floor as if dead, said Mr. Neil. When I came round, I knew nothing of what had gone on. I knew only that I was free of these demons. They had been cast out and were gone forever.

I prayed and thanked the Lord Jesus for setting me free.

I was very tired indeed. My throat was bruised, and so were my ribs and my arms. But the six demons were gone. Mr. Neil prayed for me and went home.

I felt happy and free. It was wonderful. That night I slept like a baby – the best night's sleep I'd had for years.

But within a short time other demons revealed themselves to me. Some gave names, some didn't.

I was in deep despair. I thought every demon had gone. Instead, some remained. I was very confused, but Mr. Neil wasn't at all surprised. He

knew that he had cast out just a few of all that had been within. A start had been made. The rest would go the same way as the first batch and to the same place. It couldn't all be done at once, at least not in my case.

This is a powerful ministry, a very deep and exhausting ministry. Sad to say, it is also a neglected one.

My life had been an open door to demon-possession. It would be some time before I was completely free, before every demon would depart. Not that Jesus Christ could not have done it all at once and altogether. He could have. But as I have said before, His ways are past finding out.

Undoubtedly He had a special purpose. Ministers and other Christians had to be shown the reality of demon-possession. I believe Mr. Neil had to teach others how to cast out demons. And I too had to learn many things.

A real work was being done in my own heart.

## 17. Jesus Is Victor

TIME! It was something I had too much of, whereas Mr. Neil had precious little.

I wasn't so busy. The old saying that the devil finds work for idle hands is true. He certainly found plenty for my idle hands.

Besides, six demons were now gone, and it wouldn't be long before even more were cast out; the remaining demons, in danger of losing the dwelling place they'd occupied for many years, were almost constantly active, knowing that their time was almost up.

Casting out the rest of the demons was a long, exhausting ministry and had to be done at intervals, in special sessions. Mr. Neil fasted and prayed before each session. He knew he was coming into contact with powers of darkness in an actual, genuine way. Therefore prayer and fasting were most essential.

The demon Tormentor was the next to leave. It revealed itself much the same way as the others had done. It was a tormentor indeed, for I was tormented day and night, with very little let-up.

I experienced the most horrific dreams – dreams so vivid, so real, and so horrible. Ugly, hairy animals chased me to the edge of a dark, bottomless pit, hands clawed at my body, my throat. Marks were evident on my body when I awoke.

I was tormented in the daytime also, feeling compelled to wander for hours on end, seeking rest and peace and finding none. After wandering for hours, where I know not, I would at last return home to bed absolutely exhausted, only to experience dreams more horrific than before.

Another appointment was made to see Mr. Neil. The demon was now the one who was tormented.

“Take a knife and kill Neil,” it commanded me.

Obediently I placed a knife in my handbag.

“Kill, kill, kill!” it demanded.

As soon as I entered the church, the demon went mad within me.

I learned something about demons at this time: they could not see Mr. Neil until I did. They had only my eyes to see with. They knew what Mr. Neil was about to do and every movement he made only through my eyes. That they had to rely on me is proof that they are limited.

“Kill, kill, kill!” the Tormentor ordered again.

I remember no more of what happened until this demon had gone.

Mr. Neil told me later that I brandished a huge knife with the express purpose of blinding his eyes. However, he snatched it away in good time.

Apparently this demon was exceedingly strong. I was difficult to restrain, having the strength of ten men. Strong Christians had great difficulty in holding me while Mr. Neil cast out the demon.

Long exchanges again occurred between Mr. Neil and the demon. It didn't want to leave, resisting again and again. After a long battle, lasting about an hour, the Tormentor left with loud screams to Gehenna.

“Jesus is Victor!” exclaimed Mr. Neil. “Jesus is Victor!” Seven evil spirits were gone forever. A little more rest for me before even more were cast out.

As they revealed themselves – their name, their work, their time of possession – so they were cast out, never without a long, hard struggle, all hating Mr. Neil, all hating Gehenna. They knew that if they were cast out to Gehenna, it would be the end of them. “Not before the time,” they would plead.

But Mr. Neil insisted they all go to Gehenna, where they would never again torment man or beast.

Many of the demons quoted Scripture, many argued over Bible truths, and some spoke in other tongues. In the conflict they disclosed that some had possessed my body fifteen years, a few even longer.

“I'm not leaving her body,” said one unclean spirit. “I've been here for years. I'm not leaving now.”

Solicit was still another unclean spirit. Mr. Neil explained that this demon had entered my body at the age of fifteen, when I became a prostitute on the Paddington Streets. It even tried to solicit the ministers present at the exorcism.

After many verbal exchanges it eventually left with loud screams to Gehenna, along with Dark Enticer. Very smart this one, with a smart-sounding name, and works to match. It put up a very powerful display – showing off, trying to attract and allure the ministers. But it also was cast out in the more powerful name of Jesus.

Other unclean spirits, like Seducer, Stripper, Corruption, and Lesbian, were cast out to Gehenna. The Lesbian demon was most revealing, Mr. Neil

told me, and quite startling in its dialogue. It spoke in a refined society voice (so unlike my own).

In the course of exorcism Mr. Neil mentioned Mary Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils. The demon immediately took it up, saying, “Don’t speak to me about Mary Magdalene. Traitor I Traitor! Don’t speak to me about her!”

Mr. Neil also mentioned Calvary, where Satan and all demons were conquered by Christ.

“Don’t speak to me about Calvary. I was there, I was there. I saw it all. I was there years and years ago, long before I entered this body. I was there. Don’t speak to me about Calvary,” said this demon.

In spite of all protests it had to go to Gehenna before the time.

“Jesus is VICTOR!” said Mr. Neil over and over again. “Jesus is VICTOR!”

After each session, when the demons were gone, I prayed and thanked the Lord Jesus for all He had done. I thanked Him with all my heart for setting me free.

Mr. Neil often quoted these words, which I have never forgotten, for they encouraged me greatly: “Jesus is stronger than Satan and sin. Satan to Jesus must bow.”

It was at one such occasion that I actually saw the Lord Jesus Himself, standing just behind Mr. Neil. The Lord was lovely, arrayed in shining garments and bathed in a radiant light, which filled the whole room. His face was gentle and kind. His eyes were filled with deep love, and He was looking straight at me. I *knew* He loved me. I *knew* I was His child. He was setting me free.

I will never forget it as long as I live. To think that Jesus should appear to such a one as I! Ah, the wonder of it all!

I needed that vision of Jesus, for the battle had not yet ended – far from it. But I knew that as long as I was willing Jesus would complete the great work He had begun.

Of course, Satan had not given up and tried hard to put a stop to this ministry, tried to stop Mr. Neil from continuing.

“Go back to witchcraft,” said Lucifer. “Give up this nonsense.”

I had no intention of doing such a thing. The demon Witchcraft had been cast out, and with it went the power of witchcraft in me. I lost my evil powers, and I was glad.

“No.” I said, “I will never go back to the witches’ covens.”

“. . . Unless,” I thought, “I’ll go back and tell them I am through with witchcraft for good. I’ll tell them they will have to find someone else to run their evil covens.”

The more I thought about it, the more it seemed the right thing to do.

Off I went.

It was a foolish thing to do, for their answer to me was a severe beating. They dragged me half-conscious to a car and drove me to a lonely spot, where I was dumped. They believed, I’m quite sure, that I was dead or would die within a short while.

But someone found me and rushed me to a hospital, where I stayed for four days – such was the extent of the beating I’d received. It was only by a miracle that my life was spared and Satan’s plans for me were smashed. Jesus had His hand upon me, even if I was very foolish, and Satan was again defeated.

I learned a lesson, though. I would never again go near the witches’ covens. I had not heard the last of them but that came later.

About five months passed. Many demons had been cast out, but I was still not completely free of them. I felt discouraged. At times the fear and torment were unbearable. When would I be completely free? Five months was a long time. When would the last demon go for good? When would it all end?

Yes, I was flooded with discouragement. A few other Christians also lost heart. They said they could see no lasting effect of the ministry, and they pulled out.

Mr. Neil had the same feelings, but he continued with the ministry, against all odds. I’m very glad he did, or I am sure I would not be alive today. I would never have written this book.

At this time of discouragement, and between sessions of exorcism, Satan saw his last chance to finish me off for good.

I was in a terrible state one particular evening. Demons within me were really strong and active, mocking me and taunting me in an awful way. I was looking for the drug pusher, but I failed to find him. You see, I was still on drugs.

This no one knew, not even Mr. Neil, although he was certainly aware I had been taking some kind of drug. What he didn’t know was that I was on the hard stuff, heroin.

Weeping and wailing and in a state of confusion, partly from withdrawal symptoms, I was taken to a mental hospital, and there I was put to sleep for over a week sleep therapy, it's called. I tried to explain when I entered what else was wrong, but they wouldn't listen. They thought I was just very ill. I was ill indeed; but who and what caused the illness? Certainly not just the drug heroin.

"Demons! Don't be silly," said the doctor. "There are no such things as demons. It's all in your mind. You just need some treatment, and then you'll be all right."

So I was put to sleep for about ten days, and that was that. When I awoke fully, I wondered if I'd dreamed all that had happened. But the thought came to me that it was useless to talk about Jesus in the ward. Such talk would be labelled religious mania.

I was now off heroin – a great advance for me. Sleep therapy had effected the cure. But now the doctors prescribed pills, pills, pills, and more pills. I thought that very stupid, but it was no use telling them anything. No one took the slightest notice of what I said.

"See," said Satan, "you *are* mad. You will never get out of here. Even if you do leave, you'll be madder still."

I was beginning to believe he was right about that.

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Satan. "Now you are done for!"

Everyone who was mentally ill acted pretty much the same all the time, but I didn't. I knew I was not mentally ill and told the doctors so. I even felt superior to the other patients – not that it was a good thing to feel. But I was convinced I was different.

No one believed demon-possession was real. No one. There is no such person as the devil, let alone demons, I was told over and over again.

Now what? Was I to stay locked up in a mental hospital for the rest of my life? Things looked very black for me.

"Where is your Jesus now?" mocked Lucifer.

"Yes," I wondered, "where is my Jesus? What will become of me?"

Electrical convulsion therapy came next, commonly called E.C.T., or shock treatment. But I knew it would not help me. Demons can't be shaken out that way.

Chatting with a nurse one day, I said, "Nurse, do you know that before I came here I was a prostitute, drug addict, and witch, but one night I walked into a meeting and heard about someone called Jesus and how much He



loved me. I gave my heart to Him that night. What do you think about that?"

"You're just very ill, my dear," she said. "There is no Jesus. It's all a lot of silly nonsense."

"Well," I replied, "if you are a prostitute, drug addict, and so on, that is considered wrong by others, but if you want to live a different life and become a Christian, they say it's all a lot of silly nonsense. What then is right?"

She walked away quite baffled. Later she returned and spoke to me again.

"You know, you are right. You are different from many here."

Others noticed a difference too after a while, and I was watched very closely indeed.

The pills I had to take were nothing but a worry to me. I was slowly becoming addicted to *them*.

I couldn't sleep at night. Therefore sleeping pills were prescribed. I took three pills every night, and if I was not asleep before midnight, I was given another. Although I swallowed enough dope to knock anyone out for four days, I didn't sleep. I enjoyed the nice feeling it gave me and nothing else. I averaged about three hours' sleep a night.

Before very long I was first in the queue for tablets, especially the night tablets. I was now addicted to pills. One day I inquired what they were for.

"Well, this one is to calm you down, and this one is to pep you up."

"Crickey," I said, "make up your mind. What do you want?"

It was utterly useless and futile. I knew what was wrong with me. The rest of the demons had to be cast out and then I would be perfectly whole. But it was useless to say anything. No one listened. Religious mania – that's what they termed my case. I began to believe it myself for a while, ready to abandon all my beliefs just to get out.

My head was X-rayed when I complained of pain. The doctors found I had brain damage, caused, they said, by too many drugs. Now, that was a blow. Would I die? Satan was really having a field day with me.

One thing after another, just because I wanted to be a Christian. Why? Was it worth it?

"Jesus is Victor, is He?" mocked Satan. "Where is your victorious Jesus now?"

Then again, just when I needed it, that beloved solo rang out in my ears.

*Jesus cares, Jesus cares.  
He can take the sin and darkness away.*

One thing was very clear to me: Jesus was the only answer. Doctors could do nothing for me now. I recalled that lovely vision of Jesus. Had I imagined that? Of course not. Jesus was real. He did care.

“I must believe! I will believe!” I said over and over again.

I clung to the promise that Jesus would see me through and bring me out of the thick darkness into His wonderful light. I had to, or I would have gone completely mad.

Much to my surprise, I was allowed to have a weekend away from the hospital. I was overjoyed to get away from the depressing atmosphere.

On that very weekend Mr. Neil was to preach in Bristol. The Lord was moving on my behalf – I knew it. I went to the church to see Mr. Neil.

“Please help me, Mr. Neil,” I pleaded. “You must cast out the rest of the demons TONIGHT.”

He agreed to minister again. Some Christians stayed after the evening service to back up Mr. Neil and assist him in prayer. It was now or never. Darkness or light. Satan or Jesus. Madness or gladness.

I was at the church to well after midnight. Mr. Neil says it was at the stroke of midnight that the last demon left my body with loud, piercing screams. It had been a long, hard battle with the powers of darkness.

Sixteen unclean spirits had been cast out. The name of the last demon was Dementia. Its work? To destroy the brain.

“Jesus is Victor!” exclaimed Mr. Neil.

What a night of rejoicing that was. I. was free. Jesus had done it. His mighty power was felt in a tremendous way, by one and all. Mr. Neil’s face was aglow with the glory of God, and so was mine. Such praise went up in that church, such as was never heard before. It was truly a memorable night.

The evening I write of was seven months after my first meeting with Mr. Neil – a long time. But it was worth waiting for. Mr. Neil knew, and I knew, that it was all over. Jesus had delivered me. I left the church after prayer a free woman.

Later I had a further X-ray taken of my head. No brain damage was found. My X-ray was perfectly normal. “It’s nothing but a miracle,” the doctors said. They were right – a miracle of healing by Jesus Christ my Lord.

Is Jesus a lot of nonsense? Is the devil just a myth? Are demons just superstitious fairy tales handed down from the dark ages? No, a thousand times no. Demon-possession is real, very real, and is increasing at an alarming rate in this present day and age.

But Jesus, who is stronger than Satan and sin, who defeated all demons and Satan at Calvary, is alive today and is still doing wonders on the earth. Still casting out demons. Still healing the sick in body and mind.

Yes, Jesus is real. Jesus does care. Jesus is wonderful, and Jesus is VICTOR.

## 18. Peace at Bethany

AFTER that blessed deliverance in February 1965 I didn't meet Mr. Neil again for some two years because he moved to Brixham, where he is today.

I returned to the hospital for an additional two weeks until I was finally discharged. At first the hospital staff were just rather surprised to see me looking so well after my long week-end away. I wondered what they would have thought and said if they'd known about my experience. But I said nothing about it.

As the days went by their surprise turned into utter astonishment at the change in me. That something had happened they couldn't gainsay. The evidence was plain enough for all to see, but they couldn't understand it at all.

"You even look different," they said. "Younger, fresher, and more alive than before."

After such a mighty deliverance I hoped that I would be discharged straight away. I sensed that the oft-times depressing atmosphere in the hospital would be no help to me. To a certain extent I was right. Not until later did I learn that I need never have returned at all as I was a voluntary patient and under no obligation to go back if I didn't want to.

The Lord moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform. Perhaps the Saviour had a purpose for my return. Who knows!

No more shock treatment was given me. There was no need. Indeed, I was the happiest person in the whole ward far happier than the poor overworked nurses.

If I felt sadness or loneliness overtaking me, I took an interest or a part in all that was going on around me: cheering up the depressed and confused patients; talking to the elderly and lonely; brushing their hair and doing little things for them that they were unable to do for themselves; generally making myself useful and helpful in a very busy, very full, and very noisy ward.

In a strange way it reminded me of my days in prison. History seemed to be repeating itself.

The sisters and nurses were amazed, as were the psychiatrists, who stood by almost open-mouthed in astonishment at the complete transformation.

One big problem remained to be solved – the problem of the pills. Undeniably I was addicted to them. Had the psychiatrists had full knowledge of how great a part drugs played in my life, they would never have prescribed so many pills in the first place. Now it was a matter of some concern to them – a bit late in the day perhaps, but at least they partly admitted their mistake.

Before I was discharged I was advised to cut down on the many pills, slowly, and in my own way. This I promised to do, for I really wanted to be free from all drugs. Easier said than done, as I was soon to find out.

When I was discharged from the hospital, I still needed a lot of care mentally, physically, and spiritually. Before long I began to regress – not so severely as before but all the same I was moving in the wrong direction.

I was still at the beginning of my Christian pathway and experience. Every Christian experiences some kind of oppression at one time or another, and I was now suffering from oppression, and Satan saw to it that it was intensified in my case.

Darkness seemed to descend on me once again. Instead of taking less pills I was taking far more than in the beginning. Something was lacking in my life. What I needed was real love and understanding. I was, it seemed, at the crossroads and didn't know which road to take.

I often felt that Christians avoided me and were afraid to speak to me for any length of time. Perhaps my past was too fresh in their minds for full acceptance of me. Had they known about my past activities as a witch, matters would have been far worse.

The attitude of the Christians, the oppression, and the fact that I was still only a babe in Christ made things difficult for me. After all, I was just beginning to walk, so to speak. Instead of being thoroughly happy, I was once again confused and afraid.

Some Christian friends saw the need of convalescence away from the familiar surroundings of the big city with its many temptations. It was suggested that I should go to the countryside to rest, to be strengthened spiritually, and above all to be built up physically.

I wasn't at all keen about the idea to go away and stay with complete strangers. With people who knew nothing about me! No, thanks!

But how could I hurt those who were trying to help me? So despite my doubts and fears I agreed to be driven to the countryside in my friends' car.

After all, I reasoned, if I don't like it, I can always turn round and come straight back.

Eventually I arrived in the village of Gamlingay in Bedfordshire. I received a warm reception but remained very cool toward the whole project. Not that I was ungrateful; I was afraid of the unknown that lay ahead.

I shook hands politely with my hosts, Mr. and Mrs. Parker. Mr. Parker's first impression of me was of someone very lonely and wrapped up in bitterness. He observed that I was preoccupied with my own thoughts and that an air of resentment surrounded me.

My face was a picture of sadness. My eyes, he said, were! full of the pain and hurt I'd suffered and was still suffering.! The unhappiness in my life, the tremendous needs could not be disguised.

Over the years since Mr. Parker had committed his life to Christ he had come to realize the great needs of the: many lonely and unhappy people in the world. He realized that someone so obviously downtrodden in spirit as I would respond only to love and understanding. Only real love would get through to me.

Although a naturally talkative man and pastor of a small village church, he didn't preach to me. He knew that he must be a good listener to all I had to say.

Had I known Mr. Parker's train of thought, things might have been slightly different on my first evening in their company. As it was, I felt very uneasy, expecting him and his wife to start preaching or quoting Bible texts. As soon as I could, I asked if I might take Paddy, the family dog, for a short walk and inspect the village.

Once outside the house I lit a cigarette. As I walked around the small deserted village, my heart sank lower and lower. It seemed to me a very dull place. I wondered why I'd been so foolish as to allow myself to be driven to such an out-of-the-way dump as this – not even a cafe where I could sit and have a cup of tea and a fag in peace, away from everyone's eyes. I decided I would stay only a few days and make some excuse to return to the city.

During the next few days I spent my time taking Paddy out for walks. We became firm friends. I used to tell Paddy all my fears, and he would often look at me rather sadly with his big brown eyes, as if he understood every word I said. He'd never had so many walks before and must have wondered

what it was all about. Memories of my childhood floated back, of the time when I used to speak to Bessie, the old black Labrador.

As the first week slowly passed, I began to change my mind about the Parker family. No one preached at me or launched some great plans for my future. I waited for it, but it didn't come. In fact, the pastor and his wife did no more than treat me as a normal, equal person. Still more surprisingly, they accepted me into the family without question, without hesitation, and without any pressure whatsoever. They had two teenage children, a boy and a girl, and even they treated me as one of the family.

Love kept this family together, not rules or religion, for they all loved Jesus. It was simple, sweet, and so natural, and to me, so refreshing. This was the first time I'd encountered family life that was in no way unhappy or sordid. Much to my amazement, I was actually beginning to enjoy my stay.

Depression returned, however, despite the happy surroundings. Familiar doubts and fears filled my mind. My nights were often sleepless, in spite of the sleeping pill. Horrible dreams recurred again and again. In the daytime I was semi-doped, and my actions were very sluggish.

Although Mr. Parker noticed all these symptoms and was well aware I was smoking, he said nothing to me. Instead, he spent much time in prayer. He was waiting God's time, waiting for the barriers to be broken down. Slowly and surely he saw the resentment and mistrust disappear as I responded to the love of this Christian family. I realized that they really did care.

It was a wonderful step forward, therefore, when I asked in might call them Mum and Dad. At last they had won my trust and affection.

"Of course you may, my dear," they said as they took me in their arms and openly wept.

How wise, how patient they had been! Not in any great rush to minister to my deeper spiritual needs. How Christlike, to wait prayerfully and patiently for me to respond.

As I became closer to mum and dad, as I now called them, I began to open up and tell them more about myself. They didn't rush me, and I knew I could trust them to treat anything I did say as confidential. As time went on, the evil spirits that had been troubling me during my stay were dealt with. So were the fears. Little by little Slowly, prayerfully, and gently. Mum and dad dealt with it all as it arose in love and great patient understanding.

Indeed, this was just the beginning of long months of ministry to me – a tear-stained ministry. They often had to stay by my side day and night, not daring to leave me. Such was the onslaught on my soul by Satan. But the battle was the Lord's, and Jesus slowly and wonderfully brought me through to complete liberty. I began to live the Christian life to the full. Jesus was Victor once again.

When it was finally over, I saw Jesus again. Yes, I actually saw Him! This time His hands were outstretched toward me, His eyes were full of love, and He took me in His arms and whispered, "You are mine."

I knew without a shadow of a doubt that I was His. He would never let me go. He would bring me through all trials, all gloom, until one day I would see Him face to face for all eternity.

The village and the countryside that seemed so dull and lifeless before were now very dear and lovely to me. I called the place Bethany. It reminded me of that little town just outside Jerusalem where Jesus often went to visit Martha and Mary and their brother Lazarus. It too was named Bethany: a place of retreat, a place of peace and rest. It seemed an appropriate name for this little home in the countryside.

As you can see, I had begun to read my Bible. Whereas it was once unintelligible, now it was clear and plain and full of meaning. I would sit for hours reading the stories of Jesus – how He healed the sick in body and mind and made everyone He touched perfectly whole, just as He does today. Had He not touched my life, and had He not made me completely whole? It was all so thrilling. The Bible came to life.

My *Golden Bells Hymn Book*, given to me long ago in Sunday school and even taken to prison with me, was now very precious indeed. I would sit and read, and sometimes sing, those hymns I had learned so long ago, captivated by the lovely words. They were so simple and plain.

*Tell me the stories of Jesus.*

*Write on my heart every word.*

Oh, yes! The words meant something to me now. Oh, how I loved those hymns!

I could look back and realize that Jesus had followed me with his tender eye of compassion right through the long years of deepest shame. He saw me on the streets as a prostitute. He saw me in the evil temples of Satan and



in the witches' covens. Even then He loved me, even in my sin of darkest degradation. Then one day He called me and took me in.

Ah, the wonder! It filled me with great contrition, great wonderment, to think that He loved even me. It still fills me with wonderment today, and it always will.

At Bethany Jesus was drawing me closer to Himself. Removing the bitterness from my heart. Washing away the hurt and pain of years through the love in this little home. Erasing the horrors from my mind. Making me a new creature in Christ.

Everything was new – everything. It was as if I were born anew in the flesh as well as the spirit.

The whole world appeared beautiful. I loved everyone and everything in this great big wonderful world that God had made – the mangy old cat on the rubbish heap, the dandelion pushing its way through the rubble. Yes, even those things looked beautiful to me.

As I walked through the green fields into the thick woods, my heart sang. I danced for sheer joy at all I saw, at all that Jesus Christ had done for me and all he was showing me and all He was going to do for me in future days.

For the first time in my life I noticed the tiny flowers growing in the earth, the blades of grass. I noticed the colours. The sky looked as if someone had taken soap and water and washed it blue. Previously the sky had looked so grey.

It looked as if someone had also painted the trees and grass green, the whole earth with glowing colours. All this beauty, displayed before my eyes, I'd passed by before. Now I was looking at the world through different eyes.

*Heaven above is softer blue,  
Earth around is sweeter green.  
Something lives in every hue,  
Christless eyes have never seen.*

I didn't know that lovely hymn then, but I'd experienced it in a very real and wonderful way.

Mere words could not express the immense joy that welled up within me. Mere words can never tell how precious and how dear Jesus was to me,

how wonderfully sweet his presence was.

One day while resting at Bethany I felt the very presence of Jesus in an even greater way than ever before. I felt His presence at first drawing nearer and nearer to my side. Then I heard the audible voice of my Saviour as He whispered sweetly in my ear.

“You are a chaste virgin in My sight. You are My modern Mary Magdalene.”

Dad happened to be nearby and saw the expression on my face. He too knew that Jesus was very, very near. I wasn’t aware of dad’s presence, only of Jesus’ presence and the words He spoke to me.

Dad said later that he’d never seen anything like it in his life. My countenance was radiant, he said. Little wonder when Jesus was so near.

“Who is Mary Magdalene?” I asked dad.

With tears in his eyes he read from his Bible how Jesus had cast out seven evil spirits from Mary Magdalene, a woman of the city, a street girl, a harlot until Jesus came into her life and changed her completely.

I wept and wept. Oh, how Mary must have loved Him! He had forgiven her so much. He had set her free. Now Jesus had spoken to me and said I was His modern Mary Magdalene. It was just wonderful, so very wonderful.

I was like her, a street girl possessed with many unclean spirits, and Jesus had set me free. Jesus was becoming more precious to me every day, yes, every hour.

“A chaste virgin in My sight.” That’s what Jesus had said.

Still weeping, dad turned to the second book of Corinthians, chapter 11, verse 2, where Paul is speaking to the church at Corinth:

“I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy, for I would present YOU as a chaste virgin to Christ.”

The church at Corinth was noted for its backslidings and wickedness. Paul was grieved, for he wanted God’s children to be pure and spotless.

I was overjoyed to think that Jesus Christ should speak to me—a former prostitute, black witch, strip-club girl—and say that in His sight I was a chaste virgin. In other words I was now clean and pure, washed in His blood, and justified in His sight. I loved Jesus even more after that. How could anyone forget such words! How could I forget such words, straight from the lips of my Saviour Himself.

Jesus continued to pour out his blessings on me. They were new every morning. I was filled with the Holy Spirit, praising, loving, and serving my Lord. He was now Lord of my life and Lord of all.

Imagine my further joy and wonder when I read the story of the woman of Samaria, how Jesus met this sinful woman at the well and gave her the water of life. At first I found it incredible that such true, simple stories were to be found in the Holy Bible. I could hardly take it in. Jesus was certainly making Himself very real to me, drawing me nearer to His side as I grew in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus.

I stayed at Bethany for some months. Jesus was teaching me Himself, preparing me for the ministry He had planned for me, assuring me over and over again that I was now a child of a King. No longer a child and slave of Satan. Now a child of God.

No, I could never forget Bethany, for it was there that love won through. Peace came in. Joy abounded.

A huge bonfire was lit one evening, and all my black clothes were burned along with cigarettes, drugs, and many other idols. It was a time of rejoicing as we ran around the bonfire, praising and thanking Jesus for everything He had done for me. It may have been a peculiar sight to others, but to us it was very meaningful.

Satan certainly trembled, but the angels were rejoicing with us, I'm sure. This was an outward manifestation and testimony of all that Jesus Christ my Saviour had worked inwardly, for Jesus Christ had chased away the fear and the dark shadows and brought me into the full light of His love.

Yes, I found joy, love, and peace in Christ at Bethany.

## 19. A Rough Diamond

“A TROPHY of grace,” “a rough diamond” – this is what Christians called me. I had now left the shelter of Beth any, returned to the city of Bristol, and started a new life.

In Mark 16:15 we read: “Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.” That little word “ye” included me, I knew. The Lord Jesus had called me, yea, chosen me, to work for Him in this world, and I now entered the pathway of service.

It was not easy. I had no Bible college education, but I had a tremendous testimony to what God can do in a person’s life, which is far greater. I wanted to tell everyone what the Lord had done for me. I also had a growing compassion for the lost, especially the prostitutes and the drug addicts. Oh, how I yearned that they too might come to a knowledge of His saving grace.

“Here I am, Lord, send *me!*” was my cry. “I will go for You.”

The Christians, however, were a stumbling block. Very few remembered me at all. Those who did hardly recognized me, for I was so changed. I dressed differently, spoke differently, and acted differently. Indeed, I Was’ different, a new creature in Christ. Despite this fact, few believed I was a true Christian.

I couldn’t understand it. Many times I suffered because of their distrust, and I shed many silent tears. Not because of what they actually said but because of the look of doubt and suspicion on their faces. It was the way they reacted in my presence. I got the impression they were afraid of me.

The apostle Paul had the same experience at first. His past was too fresh in the minds of the early Christians for them to accept him. Paul also must have suffered because of the lack of belief on the part of Christians. I knew how Paul must have felt.

But there came a time when Paul’s past grew dim in the minds of others, and they saw he was a true disciple, a changed man. And so there came a time when Christians saw I also was a true believer of Jesus, and they accepted me. They realized my life was changed and I was free of the past bondage.

Then they called me either a trophy of grace or a rough diamond. Such expressions were entirely new to me. I’d never heard such phrases before.

Now, I didn't mind being called a trophy of grace. But a rough diamond! I wasn't sure about that. It was the word "rough" that put me off somewhat.

Well, this rough diamond was off on a mission, Back to the streets, but for a different reason than before. Where better – to start carrying out the Lord's command than among my old friends and acquaintances? But they thought I was quite mad.

"Poor old Diana has got religious mania," they said. But I didn't mind. I just kept on telling them what Jesus had done for me and could do for them if they would only let Him.

"We will give you three months, Diana," they said.

"Then you'll be back on the game with us."

"Old Diana is dead," I replied. "You will never see her again."

My proper name is Doreen, but they went on calling me Diana. It didn't matter.

Oh, how I loved those girls! Many times I would stand on the street corner with my arms around their shoulders and weep for their souls. In the end they had to admit I had what they lacked – real happiness and peace of mind.

"You look well on it, anyway," they said. "Your eyes are clear, and you look very happy."

So I was, but my heart ached for them.

"We can never change now, Diana," they often said.

How I wept, for had I not thought and said the same thing?

"If you let Christ take over your life, He would do it for you," I told them over and over again.

"Perhaps when we're older, we will think about it, but not now," they would say as they walked away.

Now I could really say, "There, but for the grace of God, go I."

Indeed, I had gone that way for many years. If anyone knows how a prostitute feels, I do.

Regardless of rebuffs (and I had plenty), I just went on telling them of the love of Jesus. Not once a week, but every single day and night. Often I went out late at night to contact them, for I knew just where to find them.

"Look out! Here comes Diana with her Jesus leaflets," I heard one girl say.

Very often I would see them shoot off down a side street when they caught sight of me approaching.

“You will walk the streets in different shoes, My child.”

These are the words that Jesus had once whispered in my ear, clearly and sweetly. At the time I wondered what Jesus meant, though I believed it would be revealed to me later.

Now I knew exactly what Jesus meant. I was walking the streets in Gospel shoes. My feet were shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace. (See Ephesians 6:15.)

This trophy of grace certainly lacked a little grace herself with the Christians. I wanted them to join me in witnessing to the girls on the streets. I recall saying to a group of Christians one evening:

“How about coming with me into the twilight area and speaking to the girls on the street?”

They all went very quiet and just smiled, almost as if they were sorry for me, and they didn’t answer me.

“Oh, well,” I said. “I’ll go on my own. You are hopeless.”

As an afterthought I added: “I only hope that someone comes along and tells you all the great importance of witnessing to the lost.”

They just stared at me blankly as I marched off. Oh dear, not very gracious of me, was it? I needed to pray for more grace.

Later I said how sorry I was for the way I’d spoken.

“That’s all right,” answered one girl. “Don’t be too sorry. Someone did come along and tell us about witnessing only an hour after you made that remark. It made us all think.”

One evening while I was out witnessing as usual, this time in the public houses – the very ones I often visited as a prostitute – I was speaking to a man I once knew very well, speaking about Jesus and His love. Most people in this pub knew me, and they recognized that I was a different person.

“Don’t take it so seriously, Diana,” he said. “Have a drink and forget about it for an hour or two.”

“No,” I answered. “I cannot forget about Jesus for one minute.”

All went quiet as I spoke openly and freely of what Christ meant to me. Not a clink of drinking glasses could be heard as I suddenly broke forth into song:

*Things are different now, something’s happened to me  
Since I gave my heart to Jesus.  
Things are different now. I am changed; it must be*

*Since I gave my heart to Him.  
Things I loved before have passed away,  
Things I love far more have come to stay.  
Things are different now. I am changed; it must be  
Since I gave my heart to Him.*

Everyone listened in rapt attention. It was so wonderful, so thrilling, to sing for Jesus in that public house.

When I got outside, I leaned against the wall. My heart was full, my eyes were moist, as my gaze went over that twilight area, and I longed with all my heart that lost humanity would catch a glimpse of Jesus, just a glimpse of him. How different their lives would be!

The twilight zone was my first parish, the public house my first pulpit. My first convert? An elderly woman I'd met in a public house.

She always sat in a corner all alone, looking lonely and sad. I offered her a Gospel tract and sat down to speak to her. The tears started to fall down her brown and wrinkled face.

"I've been coming to this pub for ten years," she said, "ever since my husband died. I'm all alone in the world. No one has spoken to me for years. No one ever speaks to me in here – no one at all."

My heart skipped a beat. Jesus loved her and died for her. Here was a wonderful opening for me to tell her that there was One who cared, and His name was Jesus.

"May I take you home?" I asked.

"Will you? And stay and have a cup of tea with me."

I took her to her little house nearby. Her name was Vera, and she was sixty-three years old.

Over a cup of tea I told her how Jesus Christ had met my need. Vera was very moved. Taking my Bible, I showed her the way of salvation, perfect peace and rest. The result was we both got down on our knees, and I had the great joy of leading this dear lady to the Saviour. What a wonderful conversion it was!

When I visited Vera a few days later, she was radiant.

"I will never go back to the pub again," she said. "Instead I will get my comfort from the Bible you gave me. I'm now ready to meet my Maker."

Vera never did return to the pub, and one week later she did meet her Maker. The neighbours told me she died peacefully in her sleep. Vera went

to be with her new-found Saviour. One day I will meet her again, in glory.

One evening, walking along City Road (known as Sin Street), I was giving out Gospel tracts when a car drew up and the man indicated he wanted to speak to me. He was an old client of mine.

“Hello, Diana,” he said. “Out on business?”

“Yes,” I replied, “but not the sort you think. I’m out on the King’s business now. Here, have a Gospel tract and read about my king, Jesus.”

He was so astonished he very nearly ran into the car in front of him. Although I saw him several times that evening, circling around in his car looking for a prostitute to pick up, he didn’t speak to me again, but he gave me curious stares from the car. I prayed that he would read the tract I’d given him and find Christ as his Saviour.

Another evening I ran into yet another of my old clients while giving out Gospel tracts in the public houses. He was standing at the bar. I started to tell him how Christ had changed my life. His face went bright red, and his hands trembled so much that he couldn’t hold his glass. Suddenly he rushed out of the pub, leaving his beer on the counter.

I wondered if he was a backslider or had been under the sound of the Gospel before. He acted very guiltily.

When I’d finished giving out the tracts and speaking for Jesus in this pub, I moved on to the next one. There was the man again, and as soon as he saw me, he rushed out again, leaving his beer. Later on we met a third time.

“Are you bugging (following) me?” he asked. “Everywhere I go, you’re there.”

“No, it isn’t me that’s following you,” I replied. “Jesus is, and He wants you to surrender to Him.”

At these words he rushed out again, this time nearly knocking over the people and the tables as he went. He never did get to drink his beer that night.

How I prayed that he would turn to Christ for peace and rest.

This, then, was how I first began my ministry for Jesus: walking the same streets I’d walked as a prostitute, preaching the Gospel to every creature, telling men and women that Jesus is alive and that Jesus cares for them.

One of my favourite words is “whosoever,” for it means everybody everywhere, no matter who or what you are.

Satan tried to discourage me, tried to make me give up.



“Go on, have a little drink,” he whispered in my ear. “Just one. No one would know.”

No, but Jesus would see, and my testimony could be ruined if I listened to Satan.

“Resist the enemy, and he will flee,” the Bible says.

So in the name of Jesus I said: “Get ye behind me, Satan.”

And Satan fled.

One night the temptation was very strong.

“No one believes you,” Satan said, “not even the Christians. You’re wasting your time. Give it all up, and have a drink and a smoke. Relax in the pub for a little while.”

In the name of Jesus I rebuked Satan, but still he persisted. In desperation I got on the telephone to dad at Bethany. Hearing about the temptations and how troubled I was, he prayed for me over the phone. He told Satan to be gone in the name of Jesus.

“Go home now,” dad said, “and as you pass the public houses, take the hand of Jesus in faith. He will guide you safely home.”

Whether he meant me to take him literally or not, I don’t know, but as I passed each pub, as Satan tried again to get me inside to drink instead of witness, I raised my hand to heaven in faith, saying quietly:

“Lord Jesus, take my hand in Thine. Keep me from all wrong.”

It worked. I never did succumb to those temptations of Satan. It must have been a strange sight for passers-by to see someone walking along with a hand in the air. Strange or not, Satan was defeated once again. Jesus was Victor. His hand guided me, kept me from falling.

Satan tried in another way to stop me in my work for the Master. The black witches sent me letters, threatening my life if I didn’t keep quiet about witchcraft. They were awful letters, saying:

“You will die if you don’t stop running down witchcraft.”

Some of the letters were written in blood. It really frightened me at first, for I knew that black witches carry out their threats. Satan was pulling out every trick he knew to discourage me. Now what? Would I keep quiet about witchcraft? Would I stop warning people of the evil and dangers of the occult because my life was in danger?

No, most certainly not. People should be warned. Such letters only went to prove how evil it all was.

I took courage from Paul's epistle to the Romans, chapter 8, verses 38 and 39, where we read:

"For I am persuaded that neither death nor life nor angels nor principalities nor powers nor things present nor things to come nor height nor depth nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord."

"Nor witch nor Satanist," I added.

No, nothing can separate me from Jesus or the truth.

My Jesus was stronger than any witch or Satanist. The Lord Jesus Himself dealt with the witches that threatened me, in His way. No harm came to me. His hand was protecting me every hour.

As you see, I had my discouragements right at the beginning of my ministry. But Jesus was teaching me to trust Him, whatever situation came my way, whatever trial crossed my path, no matter how great or how small. Jesus would see me through. After all, He saved me and delivered me to serve Him.

How could I keep quiet about the evil web of witchcraft? Someone must warn people about the awful evil of it all. Who better than I?

Right at the commencement of my work and ministry Jesus was preparing me for even greater things. I didn't know it then, but I do now. He was teaching me to trust Him at all times, making plain His word, preparing me for greater spheres of service in the kingdom of God.

Day by day I was getting stronger, and so was my testimony. Next I began to give witness at Christian meetings. Starting in a small way, I was learning to speak publicly.

My cockney accent often caused amusement. Very often I got my tongue twisted. But far from making a mess of it all, these things made my testimony more natural and real. Little by little, step by step, line upon line, the way was opening up for me to speak at bigger meetings. More and more people invited me to chapels, churches, schools, women's meetings, coffee bars, to give my testimony.

How it thrilled me to witness for Jesus in front of so many people! More thrilling still to see men and women, young and old, surrendering their hearts and lives to Christ. As I progressed further along the Christian pathway of service, as I grew in grace, I thought again about the expression "a rough diamond." Now I saw it in a different light altogether and understood the deeper meaning.

Not that I knew everything there is to know about diamonds. But I did know they are found in the hottest and darkest parts of the earth, and when diamonds are first quarried, they are rough and unpolished. Not until they are put into the skilful and expert hands of the lapidary do they become perfect and beautiful. Rough edges have to be cut away and facets have to be cut into the rough stone to allow the glowing colours to shine through. Finally, they are polished. The result is a most exquisite jewel of great value.

As I thought about the processing of the diamond, I didn't mind being called a rough diamond. Did not the tender Saviour draw me up from the quarry of darkness and deepest shame to fashion and mould me, just like a rough diamond, to His likeness and for His glory?

I am still in the Great Lapidary's loving, skilful hands. He is still doing His own wonderful work on this rough diamond.

## 20. A Fuller, Deeper Ministry

THE Bible says: "I have set before you an open door, and no man can shut it."

Many doors have opened up for me to preach the grand old Gospel story and to testify of Christ's mighty transforming power in my life. It has been a joy and privilege for me to give my testimony at many crusades in this country led by Dr. Eric Hutchings.

The first crusade I took part in was at Leeds, where I gave my testimony in the form of an interview with the singer John Grant. I was very nervous, but the Lord Jesus helped me, and it was a great blessing.

It was strange to recall the night in June 1964 when I was ready to punch Dr. Eric Hutchings on the nose. If anyone had told me then that one day I would stand side by side with Dr. Hutchings and speak of what Christ had done for me, I would have laughed in utter disbelief. Yet I was sitting on the same platform with him and telling how on that very night in Bristol I surrendered my black and sinful heart to Jesus Christ.

"Jesus has brought me a long way since then," I thought as I sat on the makeshift platform in the old tram depot.

This was the first of many crusades at which I spoke, but I will never forget it. The congregation was not very large and was rather taken aback as I related only some of the evil in my past sinful life. Many eyes were opened to the awful reality of darkest sin and wickedness in this so-called enlightened age.

Imagine what a great thrill it has been for me to stand with Betty Lou Mills while she has sung again and again that lovely solo I heard in the Colston Hall at Bristol. Meeting Betty and getting to know her as a person as well as a Gospel singer has proved a great blessing to me. She is a very sweet girl and so understanding about the many pressures and responsibilities of being in the public eye. Her singing has remained a source of inspiration to me as well as to many others.

Between my public engagements I often go out into the highways and byways, compelling sinners to turn to Christ, who alone is the answer to the many problems in the world today. I did this not only in Bristol but in many parts of the country, especially London. Back down the familiar streets of Soho my heart has ached for the many lost souls that frequent the strip

clubs and other dens of iniquity, as I returned with a message on my lips of hope, joy, and the perfect peace which the world and its pleasures can never, never give.

One such visit was to the east end of London, near the place where I was born. I was not scheduled to speak at any meeting in London. The Lord Himself sent me. It was a very special appointment.

“Go to No. 50 \_\_\_\_\_ Street, Stepney, and ask for Evelyn,” the voice of Jesus spoke to me one evening in Bristol.

I knew the voice of my master Jesus. and the message was clear and plain. I’d never heard of \_\_\_\_\_ Street, and I wasn’t acquainted with Stepney, but when Jesus tells you to go, you know that you can leave the details to Him.

Off I went to London on the train, praying all the way that Jesus would guide me to the street, praying for the right words to say when I did find the street. At Aldgate East underground station I looked around at the immediate area and was amazed to see how run down it still was.

Never ask Londoners the way, it is often said, for although they may have lived in the city for years, very few can direct you. That old saying seemed too true in this case, for no one I approached knew where \_\_\_\_\_ Street was.

In the end I contacted a local minister and told him of my mission. Somewhat surprised, he and another minister took me to \_\_\_\_\_ Street. It didn’t appear very hopeful. Indeed, it looked pretty hopeless. The street was absolutely filthy, with all kinds of rubbish littered everywhere, from dirty old mattresses to heaps of rags and rusty bedsteads.

The houses were boarded up, ready for the demolition squad. It didn’t seem possible that anyone lived there at all. But right at the end of the road one house was still occupied – No. 50. It seemed incredible.

The tenant, a very large woman, was leaning out of the dirty window. She was so large she almost filled the window frame.

In her hand was a glass of wine, and a cigarette hung from her lips. After a quick silent prayer for guidance, I spoke to her.

“Good afternoon. My name is Doreen, and I’ve come all the way from Bristol with a special message for you.”

“Oh!” she said vaguely and gazed at the three of us standing on the pavement, almost as if she didn’t see us at all.

“Yes,” I went on. “The Lord Jesus has sent me especially to you.”

“Oh,” she said again, just as if she hadn’t heard me and was preoccupied with her own thoughts.

“Oh, dear!” I thought. “I’m not getting on very well.”

Then I suddenly remembered that Jesus had said, “Ask for Evelyn.”

“Thank You, Lord,” I said, almost aloud.

“Does anyone called Evelyn live here?” I asked.

The woman came alive.

“Yes. That’s my daughter. So you want to speak to her?”

Then in the same breath: “Do come in.”

The inside was most appalling. The walls were very damp, and the woodwork was rotting away.

“This place isn’t fit for pigs to live in,” the woman said.

I had to agree with her.

“It’s overrun with rats,” she continued.

I saw one run along the passage, and I shuddered.

“We’re moving soon,” she explained.

She showed us into a small, barely-furnished room. No rugs or lino covered the dirty floorboards, yet in the corner was the most expensive cocktail cabinet I’ve ever seen. A young girl of about eighteen was lying, fully clothed, between dirty bed linens on a very rickety double bed.

“Is this Evelyn?” I asked gently.

“No,” said the woman. “This is Jane. Evelyn is upstairs on the top floor.”

Slowly and prayerfully I explained how I came to be there. Then I spoke a little about my past life, especially about my unhappy background as a child, and related how the Saviour had picked me up from a life of prostitution and shame to make me over anew.

Tears filled the woman’s eyes, and she said:

“I’ve not done the right thing by my children. I’m an alcoholic, my two daughters are prostitutes, and Evelyn’s on drugs.”

By this time both the ministers and I were weeping also as we saw how low Satan had dragged this family.

After we’d told this dear lady that Jesus died and rose again that she might live and pointed her to Calvary where Jesus shed His blood for all her sin, she agreed to let us pray with her. Right there and then she fell to her knees, and we got down with her and led her to the Saviour.

She repented of her sins and gave herself to Christ. There was no doubt that her conversion was real. Jane, her daughter, was very impressed as she

watched and listened intently, but she was not yet ready to receive Christ as her Saviour.

The mother then called Evelyn and told her all that had happened in the room.

“Evelyn, darling, will you let Jesus save you also?” she asked.

It was wonderful to hear the woman speak and witness in this way. However, Evelyn was not ready, and she fled back upstairs. My heart went out to her.

We committed this family to the Lord in prayer and gave them a Bible and some literature before leaving. Later we heard that Jane was in prison. A minister called on her, and there in the prison Jane also surrendered her life to Jesus Christ.

The mother wrote to say that her husband had returned, as he saw that she was a new creature. Shortly afterward the family was rehoused, and we lost contact, but we know that Christ had performed a wonderful work in this family, and He would keep His hand upon them.

Whether Evelyn was ever converted I don’t know, but Jesus had sent me, and we can safely leave the rest to Him. It is always worth being obedient to the voice of my Lord.

With Christ all things are possible. How wonderful it is that Jesus can reach anyone, wherever he may be. The Lord Jesus can speak to anyone of His servants and instruct him just where to go – even to the number of the house and the name of the street and the name of the person who is in need. Nothing is too hard for the Lord; there is nothing that He cannot do. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

My ministry and work for the Master is full and varied. Not long after the experience in \_\_\_\_\_ Street I spoke at Brighton Teachers Training College, giving my personal testimony to many of the students there. When I’d finished speaking, I threw the meeting open for questions.

Only with the Lord’s help have I been able to answer some of the questions put to me. It is truly wonderful to me how the Lord has taught me and helped me in this regard, and I give Him all the praise and glory. He alone has taught me to adapt myself to whatever environment I find myself.

Young students today have a great thirst for knowledge. I’m well aware that many have an unhealthy interest in withcraft and other forms of the occult. When I discern this, I am very careful what I say, for a little knowledge can be most dangerous.

There are, however, many Christians who are ignorant as to how to counsel those caught up with witchcraft. I do my best to teach them, putting them in the picture, so that they may be able to warn others in a far more knowledgeable and intelligent way.

My first television appearance was also an unforgettable experience. I was asked to appear on Southern Television in the news programme *Day by Day*. To say I was nervous is an understatement. To be given an opportunity to speak to thousands of viewers of what Jesus Christ had done for me was a great honour and privilege. My earnest prayer was that the Lord would be glorified and I would be asked the right questions by the interviewer, questions simple and straightforward. The Lord undertook to help me in a marvellous way.

“How can a prostitute, drug addict, and witch be an evangelist?” the interviewer asked.

“Such people cannot,” I replied, “unless their lives have been transformed by the Lord Jesus Christ. I’m no longer any of those things, for my life has been changed by Jesus. I am now a new creature in Christ.”

The rest of the questions were as simple to answer as the first one, and Jesus was glorified on television. Thousands heard of what Christ can do, and everyone at the television studio also saw and heard that Jesus can change a person’s life. It has been my great joy and privilege to speak on many radio programmes also, telling out the same message that Jesus Christ is alive today and is still doing miracles.

Yet again I was invited to appear on a television news programme, this time on Harlech television. At the same time I was appearing at Cardiff Cory Hall with Dr. Eric Hutchings and his team. It was a tremendous interview, and once again the Gospel was preached on a television news bulletin. After all, the message of salvation is the greatest news of all.

My visit to Cardiff was cut short, however, as the very next night I fell and damaged my ankle in Cory Hall. I’m quite sure that Satan was trying to put a stop to all the Lord was doing in Cardiff. He was very annoyed that Jesus was getting extended news coverage on both television and radio.

But the Lord permitted the accident to happen and turned it into good. At Cardiff General Hospital I was surprised to find that everyone remembered seeing me on television the night before. I was in so much pain I’d completely forgotten my television appearance. The nurses and student



doctors had not forgotten, and I was able to speak to them about my Saviour.

Everyone, including the patients in the casualty department, heard again the good news of salvation. The student doctors who examined my foot were absolutely amazed as I related to them all the Lord had done in my life.

“There’s no known cure for heroin addiction,” said one young doctor. “You’re a living miracle.”

“Well, preacher lady,” said another student doctor as he looked at my X-Ray, “you will not be preaching again for a little while, for you’ve cracked a bone in your ankle.”

I had to smile at his words, for I was preaching right there and had been for some hours, from a wheelchair.

A fine Christian doctor took me back to Bristol by car. We had a wonderful time of fellowship on the drive.

Prior to leaving Cardiff I made a tape-recorded message for the next meeting in Cory Hall. I was told later that it made a bigger impact than if I’d been there in person. So I did preach the Gospel after all, and Jesus was once again glorified.

Later, when my ankle was healed, I returned to Cardiff. All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose. I didn’t know that I was to see good resulting from the television appearance of my previous visit.

I was giving my testimony on a Saturday evening in a large church in Cardiff. Near the end of my address a voice rang out across the congregation:

“Can Jesus do anything for me?”

“Yes,” I replied. “Jesus can do anything. Nothing is impossible with the Lord. Come out to the front now, and I will pray with you.”

Out to the front ran a young coloured man, tears streaming down his cheeks. He dropped to his knees, and I led this young man to the Saviour. He was gloriously saved – there was no doubt about it whatsoever. It was a wonderful sight to behold.

A little later he told me this true story. His name was Samuel, and he had not long been released from Cardiff prison.

“While I was in prison,” said Sam, “I saw you on the television, and I listened to all you said. When I got back to my cell, I said, ‘Oh, God, if

You're real, let me meet that woman.'

"I knew you had something I didn't have, and I wanted what you had.

"Then tonight I saw your name on the poster outside, and I came in. You spoke just the right word for me. My life was ruined, and I was a rejected man. My life's been in a real mess, but now I know I'm saved, and my past has been wiped clean by Jesus."

What a time of rejoicing it was when Sam's life was transformed by the power of God!

Sam is now a very fine Christian and always witnessing for his Lord. He came to visit me a few months ago. His face was radiant with the joy of the Lord, and his praises to Jesus rang out loud and clear. His prayer was a great joy to listen to.

Sam is a real trophy of grace. Giving his testimony at churches and preaching the Gospel himself, Sam is a great blessing.

Still growing in grace and in knowledge of Christ, I find my ministry is deeper and fuller than ever. So many people are lost and lonely without a single friend in the world, without a glimmer of hope, light, or love. I know just how it feels to be very lonely, so I have a special message for them.

The message is simply this: there is one who cares and understands. His name is Jesus, who said: "Come unto Me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

How I have proved His word time and time again! Jesus really does give rest, light, and love. He really is the truest Friend there is. He died alone on Calvary that men and women everywhere need never be lonely again. . . .

Holland – land of canals, tulips, and windmills. My destination was Middelburg, a small island just off Holland's mainland. There I joined Dr. and Mrs. Hutchings to take part in a Christian crusade, to tell the people of Holland what Jesus had done for me.

Middelburg has a beauty all its own: narrow, cobbled streets, old and picturesque churches with sweetly chiming bells, and Dutch traditional dress, which is worn all the time. Everything is touched with a quaint, old-world charm – a refreshing change from our modern noisy towns and cities.

Yet amidst all this beauty dozens of drug addicts existed. It hardly seemed possible. They crowded into the old music hall of Middelburg to hear what we had to say about Jesus Christ. Our words had to be translated into Dutch for the benefit of the non- English-speaking people.

How the Lord moved the hearts of these Dutch people is beyond description. When the invitation was given to accept Christ into their hearts, young people, mostly drug addicts, literally ran to the front and on to the stage. These dear ones opened my eyes afresh to the deep needs of young people today.

On an afternoon walk I met many more young addicts. I shared my chocolate and peanuts with them on Middelburg square. They shared with me their many problems. It was sad to think that all they wanted was someone to talk to, someone who understood them and cared. I understood, and I wished I knew the Dutch language so that I could speak to them in a much plainer way. They really made me feel wanted by them. Some of them knew I was once a drug addict myself, and that alone was a help to them.

Language is not an impossible barrier. People feel, and they sense if you care or not. Some of these dear young addicts gave their lives to Jesus Christ at the Middelburg crusade. My prayer was that they would receive the correct care afterward, both spiritual and physical.

In Holland I made quite a few friendships that proved lasting. It was a joy to return to that land in 1972 to make a documentary film for Dutch television, which also proved a great blessing to many.

I have given just a glimpse at the full and deep ministry that the Lord has graciously bestowed on me for the glory of His name and the extension of His kingdom. It still goes on today and will continue to go on if I am willing to give my all for the service of Jesus my Lord.

I have had the joy also of witnessing to my dad of the change in my life. He said he is very proud of me indeed. As yet he has not yielded his life to Christ. I am still praying for him.

I have never seen my mum since she left home when I was eleven. I haven't been able to find her, but I believe that one day I will meet her again. Jesus knows where she is, and – who knows – maybe I'll meet her sooner than I think.

As for my four sisters, I've seen two of them. They are well. One is happily married with three children, the other works in Portsmouth. They too know of the great transformation that Jesus Christ has wrought in my heart and life.

I know this: prayer changes things. My life proves it. I always pray for all my sisters, for mum and dad. God is still working out His purposes. I leave

it all to Him, who knows the end from the beginning.

So far I have not mentioned my husband, David, because this has been the story of my own life, conversion, and ministry. But I am married to a fine Christian, who stands by me, helping and guiding me in every possible way in the work of the Lord.

David is a man of prayer, and when I have to travel without him, I can be sure he is spending much time in prayer on my behalf. We both know that if our lives are fully and wholly surrendered to Jesus Christ, there is no limit to what He can do in us and through us.

Many people in need visit our little home. Some need encouragement and guidance on the Christian pathway. Some are in need of a mighty deliverance from demons and powers of darkness. Some need practical help. We thank God that we have seen quite a number of people helped and blessed in our little house. We know that prayer changes things and that Jesus can meet all needs and problems, no matter how great or how small.

My husband is a great personal worker for the Lord behind the scenes. I thank God for him and for the help and encouragement he gives me at all times.

My earnest and sincere desire is that the Saviour will lead me higher yet, and deeper yet, into even fuller service for Him and others.

## 21. A Spiritual Welfare

*For we wrestle not against flesh and blood but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*

- Ephesians 6:12

“IS it a harmless, dotty craze, or is there something in it?” asked one of our national newspapers in a recent series of articles on witchcraft and the occult.

Far from being harmless, witchcraft and other forms of the occult are harming, yea, wrecking and ruining lives today to an alarming degree – driving men and women to suicide, mental hospitals, utter fear, and a living hell. If people saw only half of what I’ve seen in the country and overseas, they would think again before writing it all off as a harmless craze. It is not a craze that will finally fizzle out.

We must face up to facts. In the past eight years witchcraft, Satanism, spiritism, and other evil cults have trebled in their number. The occult has spread over the world like a malignant cancer.

I cannot conclude this book without giving a sober warning against such grossly evil practices, for I have met young people whose lives have been ruined by getting mixed up with dark and evil things. We must ask ourselves why do people, especially young people, get involved with witchcraft and the occult?

First of all, consider the fast-moving events in the world today: bloodshed, riots, strikes, and terrible unrest. Undoubtedly a huge question mark emerges in people’s minds. Why? they ask.

Man caters for the mind, for knowledge is increasing daily, but can man cater for an empty, broken heart? Can man ever fill the huge void? *Never.*

Young people are looking for an answer. They are looking for something to fill the gaping void. I know, for I looked for years for something to fill my empty heart. Young people will go anywhere and try anything to find that something. In their desperate search for the answer, in their search for the truth, they are turning to drugs and occult practices, especially witchcraft.

The element of mystery and excitement is one great factor that adds to the pull away from the truth, away from the one true God. Everyone is looking for a bit of excitement and mystery. Many are looking for a supernatural sign.

Where better to find these elements than in some witches' coven or Satanist temple? So Satan sees to it that the searchers do get signs – evil signs and lying wonders – in such places. I ought to know, for I have seen these evil manifestations.

The Bible warns us against witchcraft, divination, and other such diabolical practises. In Deuteronomy 18 God forbids all such practices, not because He is a cruel, forbidding God but because He is a good God, a kind and loving God. He knows these things are grossly evil. Therefore He warns us in love. He wants only the best for the men and women He made.

It is not the manifold manifestations in themselves that are the greatest evil, evil though they are. It is the diversion away from God that constitutes the greatest evil of all.

Many Christians shrink back in fear and trembling whenever witchcraft, demons, or evil manifestations are mentioned. Occult practices frighten them.

“We don't want to hear about such things,” they say. “It gives us the creeps.”

Why all the fear? This should not be so. We must always remember that Jesus is far stronger than Satan and sin, remember that Jesus conquered Satan and all demons at that wonderful place called Calvary.

The Bible tells us we should not be ignorant of the devil's devices. However can we expect to reach the lost and help those in the very grip of evil if we do not know what is going on in the world today?

This is a spiritual warfare. We cannot hope to fight the good fight of faith in this spiritual warfare if we do not know our adversary. We must know just what we are up against on this spiritual battlefield. The Word of God plainly states that unseen forces of evil are at work, and wickedness will wax worse and worse as the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. We do not have to look very far to see that wickedness is far worse today than ever it was, with more and more people in the trap of the occult, with more and more people in the evil web of witchcraft.

Some Christians have no idea how wicked some evil is. We are bound to encounter evil such as was never known before. So it's wise to be alert to it

all now. We are going to come across it one way or another, whether we like it or not.

Even little children are playing devil games like ouija boards. I have been requested to visit especially junior schools to warn children of the dangers of dabbling. Christian school teachers and parents have been alarmed to learn that children dabble in awful, evil practices.

Children's minds have been tortured and twisted in fear when dire things have actually happened while they were playing with ouija boards. Parents have been distraught with worry when their little ones were terrified to attend school, had nightmares, and refused to eat their food, all because of ouija games.

Dabbling like this is extremely dangerous, not only to souls but to minds and bodies also. One of Satan's tricks is to come as an angel of light and deceive people into thinking it is all perfectly harmless. I myself have been shocked and appalled at some of the things that go on in schools.

One Christian school teacher told me that fifteen out of twenty in his classroom were playing devil games. It was an awe-full privilege to warn the boys and girls at this school of the dangers. It is only one of the schools where ouija boards are played with.

Christians should never be afraid of the devil's devices. Never fear witchcraft dolls, voodoo practices, or demonic threats. Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world.

Christians everywhere should be up and doing, strong in faith and scornful of fear. We can go forth into a world of woe clad in the whole armour of God, not in fear, not in any way ignorant of the many diversions that Satan has put in the way to allure, trap, and pull away men and women. boys and girls, from the narrow pathway of life and light.

Part of my ministry in this spiritual warfare is to warn people against deceitful diversions, no matter what form the diversion takes, and to point them to the right pathway, which is Christ of Calvary, the great and mighty Deliverer.

Having said all this, I am well aware, however, that there are some poor misguided people who have what I call demon or devil mania. They can think and speak of little else. Demons seem to make up their main spiritual diet, for it's demons at breakfast time, dinner, and tea. They see demons in everything and everybody – demons in the cat, demons behind every hedge, demons everywhere.

These poor people seem to think it their sole life's work to cast out or deal with so-called demons. Sad to say, they do untold damage and cause confusion and chaos.

To be obsessed with the subject of demons is very dangerous indeed. I have come to the conclusion that people who can talk of nothing but demons and what the devil is doing are in need of deliverance themselves. Many, however, lack the right kind of Bible teaching, and sad to say, do not want any Christian discipline at all.

Although part of my ministry is to expose witchcraft and warn of the dangers of the occult, I can assure you I am not always talking about demons and witchcraft. Only when I am requested to give my full testimony do I speak of demonic powers, and then it is to expose the devil and all his works, not to glorify him in any way. I am at my happiest when I am preaching the grand old Gospel story, talking about Jesus and His love.

In Revelation 12:11 we read: "And they overcame him (the devil) by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony."

I often quote this verse before I give my testimony. It is a wonderful fact that wherever we give testimony to the glory of God we once again overcome Satan. Satan hates to see God's children give glory to God through a personal testimony.

Although there is danger of the extreme as far as demons are concerned, it is also a fact that some Christians do not believe that demons exist at all. When Jesus was here on earth, He healed the sick and cast out evil spirits – two entirely different works altogether.

Jesus Himself said in Mark 16: "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. In My name you will cast out devils (demons), ye shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover."

Many more people are demon-possessed today than when Jesus was here on earth. Jesus Himself said that wickedness shall increase. There are more open doors for demon-possession in men's and women's lives than ever before. So then, we have the two extremes: some who talk and think of nothing but demons and the devil, some who deny the very existence of demons or even a devil.

Very often poor people in genuine need of deliverance from demons within go undelivered and neglected because of this unbelief. We must have balance in all things and not be lobsided in any way. We must embrace the whole World of God, not just part of it. Put on the whole armour, says Paul,



in the spiritual warfare, for it is not a carnal warfare but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. Strongholds of Satan.

Yes, demon-possession is real. Very real. But thanks be to God, Jesus also is real. His word tells us so, and I have proved it so. Demons can be cast out in the name of Jesus. At the name of Jesus devils fear and fly. Sick bodies can be healed today.

Jesus said: “Go and preach, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand,’ heal the sick, cleanse the leper, raise the dead, cast out devils. Freely ye have received, freely give. “

We are His disciples, I am His disciple. He has freely forgiven me *all* and has set me completely free from the power of the devil and demons. He has filled me with the Holy Spirit. Therefore I will freely give my all to Him. He has forgiven me much, therefore I love Him much.

All my past He has put behind His back forever more, never to be remembered against me anymore. He has washed me whiter than the snow and says, “It is just as if you never sinned at all.” JUSTIFIED.

Isn’t it wonderful? Instead of witches’ robes, instead of filthy rags of sin and shame, He has clothed me with the garments of salvation. He has covered me with the robe of righteousness – new garments for a new creature. He has given me a new song and placed my feet upon a rock, even Christ Jesus my Lord.

No wonder I get excited. I have new life, new love, new clothes, and a new song. I have something to be excited about. Indeed, when I am preaching, I get so filled with joy I often burst forth into song and have been known to dance with the sheer joy of the Lord.

Jesus said: “Go and preach the good news of salvation to every creature, and in My name do exploits.”

Furthermore, Jesus said: “Greater things ye shall do than I, because I go to the Father.”

Tremendous, isn’t it?

Let me relate one example where the Lord used me to cast out devils in His name – just one example, for the Lord has used me in this field many times.

I was conducting a tent crusade in Liverpool. It was a huge tent, and it was packed every night. Every night souls were gloriously saved, and sick bodies were instantly healed. Christians dedicated their hearts and lives to

Christ. It was a week I shall never forget. God's Holy Spirit was in operation in great power.

One evening the television cameras were set up, and I appeared again on television. Once again Jesus was glorified on television news. Jesus was hot news in Liverpool, not only on television but on radio Merseyside also.

Near the end of this week of blessing another wonderful thing happened. A dear old Christian lady came up to speak to me.

"I want you to pray for David, my grandson," she said. "Once he was a fine Christian boy, but now he is involved in black magic."

Tears filled her eyes as she went on.

"He has lived with me for years, and I love him dearly, but he has put years on me. I cannot rest until he is completely restored."

"One night," she continued, "I was waiting for him to return, for I can never go to bed until I see him safely home. I was sitting in my rocking chair praying when I felt an evil presence in the room. Suddenly I saw an evil, ghost-like figure appear. I called upon the name of Jesus and it left.

"When David returned, he saw I was upset, and I told him what had happened and begged him to turn again to Christ. David was so frightened he decided to finish with his evil practices.

"But he can't get free. Every night I hear him pacing up and down in his room. He's in a terrible state. I always pray for him. I've asked him to come to the tent, but he refuses. He thinks it's too late."

She was in a very disturbed state of mind. After I prayed with her and assured her of my continued prayers on David's behalf, she left in a more contented frame of mind.

The next night David was present at the meeting. When I'd finished preaching, I appealed to those who needed prayer to come forward. Many responded to the appeal. Some needed healing for their bodies, and some came to give their hearts and lives over to Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit was moving again in a tremendous way. Souls were saved and bodies healed.

Among the many seekers was David. I had no idea that the boy I'd prayed for the night before had come forward. As I moved along the prayer line, I reached David and spoke to him.

"What is your name, son?"

"David," he replied.

The Lord showed me that this was the grandson of the little old Christian lady.

“You have broken your poor granny’s heart, David,” I said.

He nearly fell over backwards in surprise.

“You have played with fire,” I went on, “practising witchcraft and voodoo. But if you repent tonight, Jesus will set you free.”

“How did you know?” he asked.

“Your grandmother told me all about you last night. And tonight the Lord showed me you were the boy.”

Yes, among the five hundred people present the Lord had directed me to David.

The boy stayed behind, and I had to talk to him for hours, pointing out the seriousness of what he had done. David truly repented in floods of tears. But it was long hours before he was completely free of demons.

With the prayerful support of other Christians I cast out seven demons into Gehenna in the name of Jesus. It was a tremendous battle, yea, a spiritual warfare with the very devil himself.

The demons were very strong and contested and fought for their ground, but Jesus was stronger, and David was finally delivered, set free by the power of Jesus Christ, the mighty Victor.

At three o’clock in the morning David was baptized in water in the baptismal tank under the big top. He was also baptised with the Holy Spirit. How he praised and prayed in a heavenly language! It was a joy to listen.

His dear old grandmother was beside herself with joy and thanksgiving to God when I met her in the evening meeting. This time tears of joy ran down her cheeks.

“I can rest easy now,” she said. “He has been praising God all day at the top of his voice. He has burned all his books of magic and charms. Praise be to God.”

But in the spiritual warfare on God’s battlefield it has not always been victory, victory, victory, all the way. There have been failures and mistakes also. There have been times when I have fallen headlong to the ground in defeat with a great crash. There have been moments when I have lacked grace, foresight, and wisdom.

Then Satan has laughed and said, “You are nothing but a failure. Throw down your sword now, and give in.”

Instead of staying down in defeat and failure, I have allowed the Lord to pick me up – and then I have fallen down at the foot of the old rugged cross and admitted my failure.

I have wept and cried: “Jesus, I’m a failure. I’ve made a mess of things, but I still love you. Have mercy on me, and help me to go on.”

I have learned from my mistakes and failures. By God’s grace I have learned to look my failures and defeats squarely in the eye and face up to them.

Does God ever get a big stick and chase us out of the fold because of our defeats and failures? A thousand times no. He gently picks us up if we confess our faults and puts us back on our feet and tells us to go on.

Failure and defeat have brought me to a place of utter dependency on Jesus, the mighty Captain of my soul.

It’s no use staying down in the dust when we fail and make mistakes, for Satan would only tread us further down than ever. We must not give up when we have failed the Lord. Satan is always ready to pounce on us like a vulture when he sees us fall. One of his favourite tricks is to convince us we are not perfect enough, or he tells us we will never rise above our failures.

In the Bible we read that some of God’s greatest men have failed Him at some time. King David was a mighty warrior and a singer of psalms. Yet David sinned and failed God. He saw another man’s wife and coveted her for himself. He deliberately sent Uriah, her husband, to certain death in the forefront of the battle in order to have this woman for his wife.

But David repented, he faced up to his failure, he confessed his sin. We read in the Bible that David ran into God’s house and caught hold of the horns of the altar and found forgiveness and peace with God. Then he went on to face and win many more battles.

Jacob too was a man of prayer, who once wrestled with an angel. Yet he too failed, he too had his faults and failings. He deceived his aged father, stealing his brother’s blessing and inheritance. He despised his wife Leah because he was in love with her sister Rachel. Jacob was caught up in a web of trickery, deceit, and unfaithfulness of heart, yet Jacob was also a great man of God.

Peter too failed Christ at the time when He needed him most. Peter repented and went on. He rose above the ashes of denial to lead a church to Pentecost.

These men and others rose above defeat to serve God with renewed peace, power, and greatness.

Everyone makes mistakes and has failed God at some time or other. No one is absolutely perfect.

Even the apostle Paul says in Romans 7: “For the good that I would I do not, but the evil which I would not, that I do.”

He goes on to say: “Oh wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”

The answer? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Only by Christ can we overcome.

Christians, look upward, not inward, when you fail and make mistakes. Face up to your failures. Cry aloud to Jesus. Lean hard on Him. Get things right. Get up, and go on with God, as I have, to higher heights and deeper depths with Christ.

I am still on the battlefield for my Lord, still in this spiritual warfare. Not alone, for Jesus my mighty Captain of salvation goes before me and fights for me. Without Him I could do nothing but fail. As long as I have strength I will serve Him here below. As long as He lends me breath I will praise Him and speak of all His love, grace, compassion, and power.

I want the whole wide world to know I love Him. I want the whole world to know Him too. I want to tell everybody, everywhere, that my Jesus lives, my Jesus cares, my Jesus is wonderful and can do anything. Nothing is impossible for Him. *Nothing!*

Another battle has been won as I finish this book. It has been a battle – a big one. At first I didn’t want to write it at all. Besides, I didn’t think I could.

Many people asked me: “Why don’t you write a book?”

Easier said than done, I thought. When would I find time to write a book? It was only after much prayer that I began it at all and then only by God’s help and guidance. I’ve written it between preaching engagements. I trust and pray that it will be a blessing to all who read it.

With the completion of this book another spiritual battle is over. Other battles will follow, but with Jesus beside me I am confident that I will conquer every foe. With His mighty hand in mine and by His strength divine, I will fight the good fight of faith, clad in the whole armour of God: my helmet of salvation, my breastplate of righteousness, my loins girt about with truth and my feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace, and in my hand and heart the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, my Bible. How can I fail?

When I was a child – so lonely, so unhappy – I often wondered why I was born. When I was in the padded cell in Holloway Prison, I wondered

why I was born.

Now I know why I was born. I was born in the flesh to be born again by the Spirit of God. I was born to preach the Gospel to every creature. To love and serve Jesus. To comfort the lonely. To love the unlovely. To fight for Him and serve Him here below with the great and mighty army of the Lord until one day I see Him face to face and tell the story: *saved by grace*.

And the end is not yet, praise the Lord. . . Even so, come quickly, Lord Jesus. Amen.

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